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*The Complete Works of*  
**George Eliot**

Adam Bede  
Theophrastus Such  
Essays



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ADAM BELDE



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# ADAM BEIDE.

## BOOK I.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE WORKSHOP.

WITH a single drop of ink for a mirror, the Egyptian sorcerer undertakes to reveal to any chance comer far-reaching visions of the past. This is what I undertake to do for you, reader. With this drop of ink at the end of my pen, I will show you the roomy workshop of Mr. Jonathan Burge, carpenter and builder, in the village of Hayslope, as it appeared on the eighteenth of June, in the year of our Lord 1709.

The afternoon sun was warm on the five workmen there, busy upon doors and window-frames and wainscoting. A scent of pine-wood from a tent-like pile of planks outside the open door mingled itself with the scent of the elder-bushes which were spreading their summer snow close to the open window opposite; the slanting sunbeams shone through the transparent shavings that flew before the steady plane, and lit up the fine grain of the oak panelling which stood propped against the wall. On a heap of those soft shavings a rough gray shepherd-dog had made himself a pleasant bed, and was lying with his nose between his fore-paws, occasionally wrinkling his brows to cast a glance at the tallest of the five workmen, who was carving a shield in the centre of a wooden mantel-piece. It was to this workman that the strong barytone belonged which was heard above the sound of plane and hammer singing, —

“Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
Thy daily stage of duty run;  
Shake off dull sloth . . .”

Here some measurement was to be taken which required more concentrated attention, and the sonorous voice subsided into



a low whistle; but it presently broke out again with renewed vigor,—

“Let all thy converse be sincere,  
Thy conscience as the noonday clear.”

Such a voice could only come from a broad chest, and the broad chest belonged to a large-boned muscular man nearly six feet high, with a back so flat and a head so well poised that when he drew himself up to take a more distant survey of his work, he had the air of a soldier standing at ease. The sleeve rolled up above the elbow showed an arm that was likely to win the prize for feats of strength; yet the long supple hand, with its broad finger-tips, looked ready for works of skill. In his tall stalwartness Adam Bede was a Saxon, and justified his name; but the jet-black hair, made the more noticeable by its contrast with the light paper cap, and the keen glance of the dark eyes that shone from under strongly marked, prominent and mobile eyebrows, indicated a mixture of Celtic blood. The face was large and roughly hewn, and when in repose had no other beauty than such as belongs to an expression of good-humored honest intelligence.

It is clear at a glance that the next workman is Adam's brother. He is nearly as tall; he has the same type of features, the same hue of hair and complexion; but the strength of the family likeness seems only to render more conspicuous the remarkable difference of expression both in form and face. Seth's broad shoulders have a slight stoop; his eyes are gray; his eyebrows have less prominence and more repose than his brother's; and his glance, instead of being keen, is confiding and benignant. He has thrown off his paper cap, and you see that his hair is not thick and straight, like Adam's, but thin and wavy, allowing you to discern the exact contour of a coronal arch that predominates very decidedly over the brow.

The idle tramps always felt sure they could get a copper from Seth; they scarcely ever spoke to Adam.

The concert of the tools and Adam's voice was at last broken by Seth, who, lifting the door at which he had been working intently, placed it against the wall, and said,—

“There! I've finished my door to-day, anyhow.”

The workmen all looked up; Jim Salt, a burly red-haired man, known as Sandy Jim, paused from his planing, and Adam said to Seth, with a sharp glance of surprise,—

“What! dost think thee'st finished the door?”

"Ay, snre," said Seth, with answering surprise; "whut's a-wanting to't?"

A loud roar of laughter from the other three workmen made Seth look round confusedly. Adam did not join in the laughter, but there was a slight smile on his face as he said, in a gentler tone than before, —

"Why, thee'st forgot the panels."

The laughter burst out afresh as Seth clapped his hands to his head, and colored over brow and crown.

"Hoorray!" shouted a small lithe fellow, called Wiry Ben, running forward and seizing the door.

"We'll hang up th' door at fur end o' th' shop, an' write on't 'Seth Bede, the Methody, his work.' Here, Jim, lend's hould o' th' red-pot."

"Nonsense!" said Adam. "Let it alone, Ben Cranage. You'll mayhap be making such a slip yourself some day; you'll laugh o' th' other side o' your mouth then."

"Catch me at it, Adam. It'll be a good while afore my head's full o' th' Methodies," said Ben.

"Nay, but it's full o' drink, and that's worse."

Ben, however, had now got the "red-pot" in his hand, and was about to begin writing his inscription, making, by way of preliminary, an imaginary S in the air.

"Let it alone, will you?" Adam called out, laying down his tools, striding up to Ben, and seizing his right shoulder. "Let it alone, or I'll shake the soul out o' your body."

Ben shook in Adam's iron grasp, but, like a plucky small man as he was, he didn't mean to give in. With his left hand he snatched the brush from his powerless right, and made a movement as if he would perform the feat of writing with his left. In a moment Adam turned him round, seized his other shoulder, and pushing him along, pinned him against the wall. But now Seth spoke.

"Let be, Addy, let be. Ben will be joking. Why, he's i' the right to laugh at me—I canna help laughing at myself."

"I sha'n't loose him, till he promises to let the door alone," said Adam.

"Come, Ben, lad," said Seth, in a persuasive tone, "don't let's have a quarrel about it. You know Adam will have his way. You may's well try to turn a wagon in a narrow lane. Say you'll leave the door alone, and make an end on't."

"I binna frightened at Adam," said Ben, "but I donna mind sayin' as I'll let 't alone at your askin', Seth."

"Come, that's wise of you, Ben," said Adam, laughing and relaxing his grasp.

They all returned to their work now; but Wiry Ben, having had the worst in the bodily contest, was bent on retrieving that humiliation by a success in sarcasm.

"Which was ye thinkin' on, Seth," he began — "the pretty parson's face or her sarmunt, when ye forgot the panels?"

"Come and hear her, Ben," said Seth, good-humoredly; "she's going to preach on the Green to-night; happen ye'd get something to think on yourself then, instead o' those wicked songs you're so fond on. Ye might get religion, and that 'ud be the best day's earnings y' ever made."

"All i' good time for that, Seth; I'll think about that when I'm a-goin' to settle i' life; bachelors doesn't want such heavy earnin's. Happen I shall do the coortin' an' the religion both together, as ye do, Seth; but ye wouldna ha' me get converted an' chop in atween ye an' the pretty preacher, an' carry her aff?"

"No fear o' that, Ben; she's neither for you nor for me to win, I doubt. Only you come and hear her, and you won't speak lightly on her again."

"Well, I'm half a mind t' ha' a look at her to-night, if there isn't good company at th' Holly Bush. What'll she take for her text? Happen ye can tell me, Seth, if so be as I shouldna come up i' time for't. Will't be, — What come ye out for to see? A prophetess? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophetess — a uncommon pretty young woman."

"Come, Ben," said Adam, rather sternly, "you let the words o' the Bible alone; you're going too far now."

"What! are ye a-turnin' roun', Adam? I thought ye war dead again th' women preachin', a while ago?"

"Nay, I'm not turnin' noway. I said nought about the women preachin': I said, You let the Bible alone; you've got a jest-book, hain't you, as you're rare and proud on? Keep your dirty fingers to that."

"Why, y' are gettin' as big a saint as Seth. Y' are goin' to th' preachin' to-night, I should think. Ye'll do finely t' lead the singin'. But I don' know what Parson Irwine 'ull say at his gran' favright Adam Bede a-turnin' Methody."

"Never do you bother yourself about me, Ben. I'm not a-going to turn Methodist any more nor you are — though it's like enough you'll turn to something worse. Mester Irwine's got more sense nor to meddle w' people's doing as they like

in religion. That's between themselves and God, as he's said to me many a time."

"Ay, ay; but he's none so fond o' your dissenters, for all that."

"Maybe; I'm none so fond o' Josh Tod's thick ale, but I don't hinder you from making a fool o' yourself wi'."

There was a laugh at this thrust of Adam's, but Seth said, very seriously, —

"Nay, nay, Addy, thee mustna say as anybody's religion's like thick ale. Thee dostna believe but what the dissenters and the Methodists have got the root o' the matter as well as the church folks."

"Nay, Seth, lad; I'm not for laughing at no man's religion. Let 'em follow their consciences, that's all. Only I think it 'ud be better if their consciences 'ud let 'em stay quiet i' the church — there's a deal to be learnt there. And there's such a thing as being over-spiritual; we must have something beside Gospel i' this world. Look at the canals, an' th' aqueducts, an' th' coal-pit engines, and Arkwright's mills there at Cromford; a man must learn summat beside Gospel to make them things, I reckon. But t' hear some o' them preachers, you'd think as a man must be doing nothing all 's life but shutting's eyes and looking what's a-going on inside him. I know a man must have the love o' God in his soul, and the Bible's God's word. But what does the Bible say? Why, it says as God put his spirit into the workman as built the tabernacle, to make him do all the carved work and things as wanted a nice hand. And this is my way o' looking at it: there's the spirit o' God in all things and all times — week-day as well as Sunday — and i' the great works and inventions, and i' the figuring and the mechanics. And God helps us with our headpieces and our hands as well as with our souls; and if a man does bits o' jobs out o' working hours — builds a oven for 's wife to save her from going to the bake-house, or scrats at his bit o' garden and makes two potatoes grow instead o' one, he's doing more good, and he's just as near to God, as if he was running after some preacher and a-praying and a-groaning."

"Well done, Adam!" said Sandy Jim, who had paused from his planing to shift his planks while Adam was speaking; "that's the best sarmunt I've heared this long while. By th' same token, my wife's been a plaguin' on me to build her a oven this twelvemont."

"There's reason in what thee say'st, Adam," observed Seth, gravely. "But thee know'st thyself an' it's hearing the preachers thee find'st so much fault with has turned many an idle fellow into an industrious un. It's the preacher as empties th' alehouse; and if a man gets religion, he'll do his work none the worse for that."

"On'y he'll lave the panels out o' th' doors sometimes, eh, Seth?" said Wiry Ben.

"Ah, Ben, you've got a joke again' me as 'll last you your life. But it isna religion as was i' fault there; it was Seth Bede, as was allays a wool-gathering chap, and religion hasna cured him, the more's the pity."

"Ne'er heed me, Seth," said Wiry Ben, "y' are a downright good-hearted chap, panels or no panels; an' ye donna set up your bristles at every bit o' fun' like some o' your kin, as is mayhap cliverer."

"Seth, lad," said Adam, taking no notice of the sarcasm against himself, "thee mustna tako me unkind. I wasna driving at thee in what I said just now. Some 's got one way o' looking at things and some 's got another."

"Nay, uay, Addy, thee mean'st me no unkindness," said Seth, "I know that well enough. Thee't like thy dog (typ— thee bark'st at me sometimes, but thee allays lick'st my hand after."

All hands worked on in silence for some minutes, until the church clock began to strike six. Before the first stroke had died away, Sandy Jim had loosed his plane and was reaching his jacket; Wiry Ben had left a screw half driven in, and thrown his screwdriver into his tool-basket; Mum Taft, who, true to his name, had kept silence throughout the previous conversation, had flung down his hammer as he was in the act of lifting it; and Seth, too, had straightened his back, and was putting out his hand towards his paper cap. Adam alone had gone on with his work as if nothing had happened. But observing the cessation of the tools, he looked up, and said, in a tone of indignation,—

"Look there, now! I can't abide to see men throw away their tools i' that way, the minute the clock begins to strike, as if they took no pleasure i' their work, and was afraid o' doing a stroke too much."

Seth looked a little conscious, and began to be slower in his preparations for going, but Mum Taft broke silence, and said,—

"Ay, ay, Adam lad, ye talk like a young un. When y' are six-an'-forty like me, istid o' six-an'-twenty, ye wouma be so flush o' working for naught."

"Nonsense," said Adam, still wrathful; "what's age got to do with it, I wonder? Ye aren't getting stiff yet, I reckon. I hate to see a man's arms drop down as if he was shot, before the clock's fairly struck, just as if he'd never a bit o' pride and delight in 's work. The very grindstone 'ull go on turning a bit after you loose it."

"Bodderation, Adam!" exclaimed Wiry Ben; "have a chap aloon, will 'ee? Ye war a-finding faunt wi' preachers a while agoo—y' are fond enough o' preachin' yoursen. Ye may like work better nor play, but I like play better nor work; that'll commodate ye—it laves ye th' more to do."

With this exit speech, which he considered effective, Wiry Ben shouldered his basket and left the workshop, quickly followed by Munn Taft and Sandy Jim. Seth lingered, and looked wistfully at Adam, as if he expected him to say something.

"Shalt go home before thee go'st to the preaching?" Adam asked, looking up.

"Nay; I've got my hat and things at Will Maskery's. I sha'n't be home before going for ten. I'll happen see Dinah Morris safe home, if she's willing. There's nobody comes with her from Poyser's, thee know'st."

"Then I'll tell mother not to look for thee," said Adam.

"Thee artna going to Poyser's thyself to-night?" said Seth, rather timidly, as he turned to leave the workshop.

"Nay, I'm going to th' school."

Hitherto Gyp had kept his comfortable bed, only lifting up his head and watching Adam more closely as he noticed the other workmen departing. But no sooner did Adam put his ruler in his pocket, and begin to twist his apron round his waist, than Gyp ran forward and looked up in his master's face with patient expectation. If Gyp had had a tail he would doubtless have wagged it, but being destitute of that vehicle for his emotions, he was like many other worthy personages, destined to appear more phlegmatic than nature had made him.

"What! art ready for the basket, eh, Gyp?" said Adam, with the same gentle modulation of voice as when he spoke to Seth.

Gyp jumped and gave a short bark, as much as to say, "Of

course." Poor fellow, he had not a great range of expression.

The basket was the one which on workdays held Adam's and Seth's dinner; and no official, walking in procession, could look more resolutely unconscious of all acquaintances than Gyp with his basket, trotting at his master's heels.

On leaving the workshop Adam locked the door, took the key out, and carried it to the house on the other side of the woodyard. It was a low house, with smooth gray thatch and buff walls, looking pleasant and mellow in the evening light. The leaded windows were bright and speckless, and the door-stone was as clean as a white boulder at ebb tide. On the door-stone stood a clean old woman, in a dark-striped linen gown, a red kerchief, and a linen cap, talking to some speckled fowls which appeared to have been drawn towards her by an illusory expectation of cold potatoes or barley. The old woman's sight seemed to be dim, for she did not recognize Adam till he said,—

"Here's the key, Dolly; lay it down for me in the house, will you?"

"Ay, sure; but wunna ye come in, Adam? Miss Mary's i' th' honse, and Mester Burgo 'ull be buck anon; he'd be glad t' ha' ye to supper wi'm, I'll be's warrand."

"No, Dolly, thank you; I'm off home. Good-evening."

Adam hastened with long strides, Gyp close to his heels, out of the workyard, and along the highroad leading away from the village and down to the valley. As he reached the foot of the slope, an elderly horseman, with his portmanteau strapped behind him, stopped his horse when Adam had passed him, and turned round to have another long look at the stalwart workman in paper cap, leather breeches, and dark-hine worsted stockings.

Adam, unconscious of the admiration he was exciting, presently struck across the fields, and now broke out into the tune which had all day long been running in his head:—

"Let all thy converse be sincere,  
Thy conscience as the noonday clear;  
For God's all-seeing eye surveys  
Thy secret thoughts, thy works and ways."

## CHAPTER II.

## THE PREACHING.

ABOUT a quarter to seven there was an unusual appearance of excitement in the village of Hayslope, and through the whole length of its little street, from the Donnithorne Arms to the churchyard gate, the inhabitants had evidently been drawn out of their houses by something more than the pleasure of lounging in the evening sunshine. The Donnithorne Arms stood at the entrance of the village, and a small farmyard and stackyard which flanked it, indicating that there was a pretty take of land attached to the inn, gave the traveller a promise of good feed for himself and his horse, which might well console him for the ignorance in which the weather-beaten sign left him as to the heraldic bearings of that ancient family, the Donnithornes. Mr. Casson, the landlord, had been for some time standing at the door with his hands in his pockets, balancing himself on his heels and toes, and looking towards a piece of unenclosed ground, with a maple in the middle of it, which he knew to be the destination of certain grave-looking men and women whom he had observed passing at intervals.

Mr. Casson's person was by no means of that common type which can be allowed to pass without description. On a front view it appeared to consist principally of two spheres, bearing about the same relation to each other as the earth and the moon: that is to say, the lowest sphere might be said, at a rough guess, to be thirteen times larger than the upper, which naturally performed the function of a mere satellite and tributary. But here the resemblance ceased, for Mr. Casson's head was not at all a melancholy-looking satellite, nor was it a "spotty globe," as Milton has irreverently called the moon; on the contrary, no head and face could look more sleek and healthy, and its expression, which was chiefly confined to a pair of round and ruddy cheeks, the slight knot and interruptions forming the nose and eyes being scarcely worth mention, was one of jolly contentment, only tempered by that



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sense of personal dignity which usually made itself felt in his attitude and bearing. This sense of dignity could hardly be considered excessive in a man who had been butler to "the family" for fifteen years, and who, in his present high position, was necessarily very much in contact with his inferiors. How to reconcile his dignity with the satisfaction of his curiosity by walking towards the Green, was the problem that Mr. Casson had been revolving in his mind for the last five minutes; but when he had partly solved it by taking his hands out of his pockets, and thrusting them into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, by throwing his head on one side, and providing himself with an air of contemptuous indifference to whatever might fall under his notice, his thoughts were diverted by the approach of the horseman whom we lately saw pausing to have another look at our friend Adam, and who now pulled up at the door of the Donnithorne Arms.

"Take off the bridle and give him a drink, ostler," said the traveller to the lad in a smock-frock, who had come out of the yard at the sound of the horse's hoofs.

"Why, what's up in your pretty village, landlord?" he continued, getting down. "There seems to be quite a stir."

"It's a Methodis preaching, sir: it's been gev hout as a young woman's a-going to preach on the Green," answered Mr. Casson, in a treble and wheezy voice, with a slightly mincing accent. "Will you please to step in, sir, an' tek somethink?"

"No, I must be getting on to Rosseter. I only want a drink for my horse. And what does your parson say, I wonder, to a young woman preaching just under his nose?"

"Parson Irwine, sir, doesn't live here; he lives at Brox'on, over the hill there. The parsonage here's a tumble-down place, sir, not fit for gentry to live in. He comes here to preach of a Sunday afternoon, sir, an' puts up his hoss here. It's a gray cob, sir, an' he sets great store by't. He's allays put up his hoss here, sir, iver since before I hed the Donnithorne Arms. I'm not this countryman, you may tell by my tongue, sir. They're our'ous talkers i' this country, sir; the gentry's hard work to hunderstand' em. I was brought hup among the gentry, sir, an' got the turn o' their tongue when I was a bye. Why, what do you think the folks here says for 'hevn't you?'—the gentry, you know, says, 'hevn't you'—well, the people about here says 'hanna yey.' It's what they call the dileck as is spoke hereabout, sir. That's what I've heard Squire Donnithorne say many a time; it's the dileck, says he."

"Ay, ay," said the stranger, smiling. "I know it very well. But you've not got many Methodists about here, surely — in this agricultural spot? I should have thought there would hardly be such a thing as a Methodist to be found about here. You're all farmers, aren't you? The Methodists can seldom lay much hold on *them*."

"Why, sir, there's a pretty lot o' workmen round about, sir. There's Mester Burge as owns the timber-yard over there, he underteks a good bit o' building an' repairs. An' there's the stone-pits not far off. There's plenty of emply i' this countryside, sir. An' there's a fine batch o' Methodisses at Tred-dles'on — that's the market-town about three miles off — you'll maybe ha' come through it, sir. There's pretty nigh a score of 'em on the Green now, as come from there. That's where our people gets it from, though there's only two men of 'em in all Hayslope: that's Will Maskery, the wheelwright, and Seth Bede, a young man as works at the carpenterin'."

"The preacher comes from Treddeleston, then, does she?"

"Nay, sir, she comes out o' Stonyshire, pretty nigh thirty mile off. But she's a-visitin' herenabout at Mester Poyser's at the Hall Farm — it's them barns an' big walnut-trees, right away to the left, sir. She's own niece to Poyser's wife, an' they'll be fine an' vexed at her for making a fool of herself i' that way. But I've heared as there's no holding these Methodisses when the maggit's once got i' their head: many of 'em goes stark starin' mad wi' their religion. Though this young woman's quiet enough to look at, by what I can make out; I've not seen her myself."

"Well, I wish I had time to wait and see her, but I must get on. I've been out of my way for the last twenty minntes, to have a look at that place in the valley. It's Squire Donnithorne's, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir, that's Donnithorne Chase, that is. Fine honks there, isn't there, sir? I should know what it is, sir, for I've lived butler there a-going i' fifteen year. It's Captain Donnithorne as is th' heir, sir — Squire Donnithorne's grandson. He'll be comin' of hage this 'ay-arvest, sir, an' we shall have fine doins. He owns all the land about here, sir, Squire Donnithorne does."

"Well, it's a pretty spot, whoever may own it," said the traveller, mounting his horse; "and one meets some fine strapping fellows about too. I met as fine a young fellow as ever I saw in my life, about half an hour ago, before I came up the hill — a carpenter, a tall broad-shouldered fellow with black

hair and black eyes marching along like a soldier. We want such fellows as he to lick the French."

"Ay, sir, that's Adam Bede, that is, I'll be bound — Thias Bede's son — everybody knows him hereabout. He's an uncommon clever stiddy fellow, an' wonderful strong. Lord bless you, sir — if you'll hexouse me for saying so — he can walk forty mile a-day, an' lift a matter o' sixty ston'. He's an uncommon favorite wi' the gentry, sir: Captain Donni-thorne and Parson Irwine meks a fine fuss wi' him. But he's a little lifted up an' peppery-like."

"Well, good-evening to you, landlord; I must get on."

"Your servant, sir; good-evenin'."

The traveller put his horse into a quick walk up the village, but when he approached the Green, the beauty of the view that lay on his right hand, the singular contrast presented by the groups of villagers with the knot of Methodists near the maple, and perhaps yet more, curiosity to see the young female preacher, proved too much for his anxiety to get to the end of his journey, and he paused.

The Green lay at the extremity of the village, and from it the road branched off in two directions, one leading farther up the hill by the church, and the other winding gently down towards the valley. On the side of the Green that led towards the church, the broken line of thatched cottages was continued nearly to the churchyard gate; but on the opposite, north-western side, there was nothing to obstruct the view of gently-swelling meadow, and wooded valley, and dark masses of distant hill. That rich undulating district of Loamshire to which Hayslope belonged, lies close to a grim outskirts of Stonyshire, overlooked by its barren hills as a pretty blooming sister may sometimes be seen linked in the arm of a rugged, tall, swarthy brother; and in two or three hours' ride the traveller might exchange a bleak treeless region, intersected by lines of cold gray stone, for one where his road wound under the shelter of woods, or up-swelling hills, muffled with hedgerows and long meadow-grass and thick corn; and where at every turn he came upon some fine old country-seat nestled in the valley or crowning the slope, some homestead with its long length of barn and its cluster of golden ricks, some gray steeple looking out from a pretty confusion of trees and thatch and dark-red tiles. It was just such a picture as this last that Hayslope Church had made to the traveller as he began to mount the gentle slope leading to its pleasant uplands, and now from his station near the Green he had before him in one

view nearly all the other typical features of this pleasant land. High up against the horizon were the huge conical masses of hill, like giant mounds intended to fortify this region of corn and grass against the keen and hungry winds of the north; not distant enough to be clothed in purple mystery, but with sombre greenish sides visibly specked with sheep, whose motion was only revealed by memory, not detected by sight; wooed from day to day by the changing hours, but responding with no change in themselves — left forever grim and sullen after the flush of morning, the winged gleams of the April noonday, the parting crimson glory of the ripening summer sun. And directly below them the eye rested on a more advanced line of hanging woods, divided by bright patches of pasture or furrowed crops, and not yet deepened into the uniform leafy curtains of high summer, but still showing the warm tints of the young oak and the tender green of the ash and lime. Then came the valley, where the woods grew thicker, as if they had rolled down and hurried together from the patches left smooth on the slope, that they might take the better care of the tall mansion which lifted its parapets and sent its faint blue summer smoke among them. Doubtless there was a large sweep of park and a broad glassy pool in front of that mansion, but the swelling slope of meadow would not let our traveller see them from the village green. He saw instead a foreground which was just as lovely — the level sunlight lying like transparent gold among the gently-curving stems of the feathered grass and the tall red sorrel, and the white umbels of the hemlocks lining the bushy hedgerows. It was that moment in summer when the sound of the scythe being whetted makes us cast more lingering looks at the flower-sprinkled tresses of the meadows.

He might have seen other beauties in the landscape if he had turned a little in his saddle and looked eastward, beyond Jonathan Burge's pasture and woodyard towards the green corn-fields and walnut-trees of the Hall Farm; but apparently there was more interest for him in the living groups close at hand. Every generation in the village was there, from old "Feyther Taft" in his brown worsted night-cap, who was bent nearly double, but seemed tough enough to keep on his legs a long while, leaning on his short stick, down to the babies with their little round heads lolling forward in quilted linen caps. Now and then there was a new arrival; perhaps a slouching laborer, who, having eaten his supper, came out to look at the unusual scene with a slow bovine gaze, willing

to hear what any one had to say in explanation of it, but by no means excited enough to ask a question. But all took care not to join the Methodists on the Green, and identify themselves in that way with the expectant audience, for there was not one of them that would not have disclaimed the imputation of having come out to hear the "preacher-woman," — they had only come out to see "what war a-goin' on, like." The men were chiefly gathered in the neighborhood of the blacksmith's shop. But do not imagine them gathered in a knot. Villagers never swarm: a whisper is unknown among them, and they seem almost as incapable of an undertone as a cow or a stag. Your true rustic turns his back on his interlocutor, throwing a question over his shoulder as if he meant to run away from the answer, and walking a step or two farther off when the interest of the dialogue culminates. So the group in the vicinity of the blacksmith's door was by no means a close one, and formed no screen in front of Chad Cranage, the blacksmith himself, who stood with his black brawny arms folded, leaning against the door-post, and occasionally sending forth a bellowing laugh at his own jokes, giving them a marked preference over the sarcasms of Wiry Ben, who had renounced the pleasures of the Holly Bush for the sake of seeing life under a new form. But both styles of wit were treated with equal contempt by Mr. Joshua Rann. Mr. Rann's leathern apron and subdued griminess can leave no one in any doubt that he is the village shoemaker; the thrusting out of his chin and stomach, and the twirling of his thumbs, are more subtle indications, intended to prepare unwary strangers for the discovery that they are in the presence of the parish clerk. "Old Joshway," as he is irreverently called by his neighbors, is in a state of simmering indignation; but he has not yet opened his lips except to say, in a resounding bass undertone, like the tuning of a violoncello, "Sehon, King of the Amorites: for His mercy endureth forever; and Og, the King of Basan: for His mercy endureth forever," — a quotation which may seem to have slight bearing on the present occasion, but, as with every other anomaly, adequate knowledge will show it to be a natural sequence. Mr. Rann was inwardly maintaining the dignity of the Church in the face of this scandalous irruption of Methodism, and as that dignity was bound up with his own sonorous utterance of the responses, his argument naturally suggested a quotation from the psalm he had read the last Sunday afternoon.

The stronger curiosity of the women had drawn them quite to the edge of the Green, where they could examine more closely the Quaker-like costume and odd deportment of the female Methodists. Underneath the maple there was a small cart which had been brought from the wheelwright's to serve as a pulpit, and round this a couple of benches and a few chairs had been placed. Some of the Methodists were resting on these, with their eyes closed, as if rapt in prayer or meditation. Others chose to continue standing, and had turned their faces towards the villagers with a look of melancholy compassion, which was highly amusing to Bessy Cranage, the blacksmith's buxom daughter, known to her neighbors as Chad's Bess, who wondered "why the folks war a-makin' faces a that'us." Chad's Bess was the object of peculiar compassion, because her hair, being turned back under a cap which was set at the top of her head, exposed to view an ornament of which she was much prouder than of her red cheeks — namely, a pair of large round ear-rings with false garnets in them, ornaments contemned not only by the Methodists, but by her own cousin and namesake Timothy's Bess, who, with much cousinly feeling, often wished "them ear-rings" might come to good.

Timothy's Bess, though retaining her maiden appellation among her familiars, had long been the wife of Sandy Jim, and possessed a handsome set of matronly jewels, of which it is enough to mention the heavy baby she was rocking in her arms, and the sturdy fellow of five in knee-breeches, and red legs, who had a rusty milk-can round his neck by way of drum, and was very carefully avoided by Chad's small terrier. This young olive-branch, notorious under the name of Timothy's Bess's Ben, being of an inquiring disposition, unchecked by any false modesty, had advanced beyond the group of women and children, and was walking round the Methodists, looking up in their faces with his mouth wide open, and beating his stick against the milk-can by way of musical accompaniment. But one of the elderly women bending down to take him by the shoulder, with an air of grave remonstrance, Timothy's Bess's Ben first kicked out vigorously, then took to his heels and sought refuge behind his father's legs.

"Ye gallows young dog," said Sandy Jim, with some paternal pride, "if ye donna keep that stick quiet, I'll tek it from ye. What d'ye mane by kickin' foulks?"

"Here! gie him here to me, Jim," said Chad Cranage; "I'll tie him up an' shoe him as I do th' hosses. Well,



Mester Casson," he continued, as that personage sauntered up towards the group of men, "how are ye t'naight? Are ye coom t' help groon? They say folks allays groon when they're hearkenin' to th' Methodys, as if they war bad i' th' inside. I mane to groon as loud as your cow did th' other naight, an' then the praicher 'ull think I'm i' th' raight way."

"I'd advise you not to be up to no nonsense, Chad," said Mr. Casson, with some dignity; "Poyser wouldn't like to hear as his wife's niece was treated any ways disrespectful, for all he mayn't be fond of her taking on herself to preach."

"Ay, an' she's a pleasant-looking un too," said Wiry Ben. "I'll stick up for the pretty women preachin'; I know they'd persuade me over a deal sooner nor th' ugly men. I shouldna wonder if I turn Methody afore the night's out, an' begin to coort the preacher, like Seth Bede."

"Why, Seth's looking rether too high, I should think," said Mr. Casson. "This woman's kin wouldn't like her to demean herself to a common carpenter."

"Tchu!" said Ben, with a long treble intonation, "what's folks' kin got to do wi't? — Not a chip. Poyser's wife may turn her nose up an' forget bygones, 'bnt this Dinah Morris, they tell me, 's as poor as iver she was — works at a mill, an' 's much ado to keep hersen. A strappin' young carpenter as is a ready-made Methody, like Seth, wouldna be a bad match for her. Why, Poyser's make as big a fuss wi' Adam Bede as if he war a nevvie o' their own."

"Idle talk! idle talk!" said Mr. Joshua Rann. "Adam an' Seth's two men; you wunna fit them two wi' the same last."

"Maybe," said Wiry Ben, contemptuously, "bnt Seth's the lad for me, though he war a Methody twice o'er. I'm fair beat wi' Seth, for I've been teasin' him iver sin' we've been workin' together, an' he bears me no more malice nor a lamb. An' he's a stout-hearted feller too, for when he saw the old tree all a-fire a-comin' across the fields one night, an' we thought as it war a boggy, Seth made no more ado, but he up to't as bold as a constable. Why, there he comes out o' Will Maskery's; an' there's Will hisself, lookin' as meek as if he couldna knock a nail o' the head for fear o' hurtin't. An' there's the pretty preacher-woman! My-eye, she's got her bonnet off. I mun go a bit nearer."

Several of the men followed Ben's lead, and the traveller pushed his horse on to the Green, as Dinah walked rather quickly, and in advance of her companions, towards the cart under the maple-tree. While she was near Seth's tall figure,

she looked short, but when she had mounted the cart, and was away from all comparison, she seemed above the middle height of woman, though in reality she did not exceed it—an effect which was due to the slinness of her figure, and the simple line of her black stuff dress. The stranger was struck with surprise as he saw her approach and mount the cart—surprise, not so much at the feminine delicacy of her appearance, as at the total absence of self-consciousness in her demeanor. He had made up his mind to see her advance with a measured step, and a demure solemnity of countenance; he had felt sure that her face would be mantled with the smile of conscious saintship, or else charged with denunciatory bitterness. He knew but two types of Methodist—the ecstatic and the bilious. But Dinah walked as simply as if she were going to market, and seemed as unconscious of her outward appearance as a little boy: there was no blush, no tremulousness, which said, “I know you think me a pretty woman, too young to preach;” no casting up or down of the eyelids, no compression of the lips, no attitude of the arms, that said, “But you must think of me as a saint.” She held no book in her ungloved hands, but let them hang down lightly crossed before her, as she stood and turned her gray eyes on the people. There was no keenness in the eyes; they seemed rather to be shedding love than making observations; they had the liquid look which tells that the mind is full of what it has to give out, rather than impressed by external objects. She stood with her left hand towards the descending sun, and leafy boughs screened her from its rays; but in this sober light the delicate coloring of her face seemed to gather a calm vividness, like flowers at evening. It was a small oval face, of a uniform transparent whiteness, with an egg-like line of cheek and chin, a full but firm mouth, a delicate nostril, and a low perpendicular brow, surmounted by a rising arch of parting between smooth locks of pale reddish hair. The hair was drawn straight back behind the ears, and covered, except for an inch or two, above the brow, by a net Quaker cap. The eyebrows, of the same color as the hair, were perfectly horizontal and firmly pencilled; the eyelashes, though no darker, were long and abundant; nothing was left blurred or unfinished. It was one of those faces that make one think of white flowers with light touches of color on their pure petals. The eyes had no peculiar beauty, beyond that of expression; they looked so simple, so candid, so gravely loving, that no accusing scowl, no light sneer could help melt

ing away before their glance. Joshua Rann gave a long cough, as if he were clearing his throat in order to come to a new understanding with himself; Chad Cranage lifted up his leather skull-cap and scratched his head; and Wiry Ben wondered how Seth had the pluck to think of courting her.

"A sweet woman," the stranger said to himself, "but surely nature never meant her for a preacher."

Perhaps he was one of those who think that nature has theatrical properties, and, with the considerate view of facilitating art and psychology, "makes up" her characters, so that there may be no mistake about them. But Dinah began to speak.

"Dear friends," she said, in a clear but not loud voice, "let us pray for a blessing."

She closed her eyes, and hanging her head down a little, continued in the same moderate tone, as if speaking to some one quite near her:—

"Saviour of sinners! when a poor woman, laden with sins, went out to the well to draw water, she found Thee sitting at the well. She knew Thee not; she had not sought Thee; her mind was dark; her life was unholy. But Thou didst speak to her, Thou didst teach her, Thou didst show her that her life lay open before Thee, and yet Thou wast ready to give her that blessing which she had never sought. Jesus, Thou art in the midst of us, and Thou knowest all men: if there is any here like that poor woman—if their minds are dark, their lives unholy—if they have come out not seeking Thee, not desiring to be taught; deal with them according to the free mercy which Thou didst show to her. Speak to them, Lord: open their ears to my message; bring their sins to their minds, and make them thirst for that salvation which Thou art ready to give.

"Lord, Thou art with Thy people still: they see Thee in the night-watches, and their hearts burn within them as Thou talkest with them by the way. And Thou art near to those who have not known Thee: open their eyes that they may see Thee—see Thee weeping over them, and saying 'Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life'—see Thee hanging on the cross and saying, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do'—see Thee as Thou wilt come again in Thy glory to judge them at the last. Amen."

Dinah opened her eyes again and paused, looking at the group of villagers, who were now gathered rather more closely on her right hand.

"Dear friends," she began, raising her voice a little, "you have all of you been to church, and I think you must have heard the clergyman read these words: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.' Jesus Christ spoke those words—he said he came *to preach the Gospel to the poor*: I don't know whether you ever thought about those words much; but I will tell you when I remember first hearing them. It was on just such a sort of evening as this, when I was a little girl, and my aunt as brought me up, took me to hear a good man preach out of doors, just as we are here. I remember his face well: he was a very old man, and had very long white hair; his voice was very soft and beautiful, not like any voice I had ever heard before. I was a little girl, and scarcely knew anything, and this old man seemed to me such a different sort of a man from anybody I had ever seen before, that I thought he had perhaps come down from the sky to preach to us, and I said, 'Aunt, will he go back to the sky to-night, like the picture in the Bible?'

"That man of God was Mr. Wesley, who spent his life in doing what our blessed Lord did—preaching the Gospel to the poor—and he entered into his rest eight years ago. I came to know more about him years after, but I was a foolish thoughtless child then, and I remembered only one thing he told us in his sermon. He told us as 'Gospel' meant 'good news.' The Gospel, you know, is what the Bible tells us about God.

"Think of that now! Jesus Christ did really come down from heaven, as I, like a silly child, thought Mr. Wesley did; and what he came down for, was to tell good news about God to the poor. Why, you and me, dear friends, are poor. We have been brought up in poor cottages, and have been reared on oat-cake, and lived coarse; and we haven't been to school much, nor read books, and we don't know much about anything but what happens just round us. We are just the sort of people that want to hear good news. For when anybody's well off, they don't much mind about hearing news from distant parts; but if a poor man or woman's in trouble and has hard work to make out a living, they like to have a letter to tell 'em they've got a friend as will help 'em. To be sure, we can't help knowing something about God, even if we've never heard the Gospel, the good news that our Saviour brought us. For we know everything comes from God: don't you say almost every day, 'This and that will happen, please God;' and 'We shall begin to cut the grass soon, please God to send

us a little more sunshine'? We know very well we are altogether in the hands of God: we didn't bring ourselves into the world, we can't keep ourselves alive while we're sleeping; the daylight, and the wind, and the corn, and the cows to give us milk — everything we have comes from God. And he gave us our souls, and put love between parents and children, and husband and wife. But is that as much as we want to know about God? We see he is great and mighty, and can do what he will: we are lost, as if we was struggling in great waters, when we try to think of him.

"But perhaps doubts come into your mind like this: Can God take much notice of us poor people? Perhaps he only made the world for the great and the wise and the rich. It doesn't cost him much to give us our little handful of victual and bit of clothing; but how do we know he cares for us any more than we care for the worms and things in the garden, so as we rear our carrots and onions? Will God take care of us when we die? and has he any comfort for us when we are lame and sick and helpless? Perhaps, too, he is angry with us; else why does the blight come, and the bad harvests, and the fever, and all sorts of pain and trouble? For our life is full of trouble, and if God sends us good, he seems to send bad too. How is it? how is it?"

"Ah! dear friends, we are in sad want of good news about God; and what does other good news signify if we haven't that? For everything else comes to an end, and when we die we leave it all. But God lasts when everything else is gone. What shall we do if he is not our friend?"

Then Dinah told how the good news had been brought, and how the mind of God towards the poor had been made manifest in the life of Jesus, dwelling on its lowliness and its acts of mercy.

"So you see, dear friends," she went on, "Jesus spent his time almost all in doing good to poor people; he preached out of doors to them, and he made friends of poor workmen, and taught them and took pains with them. Not but what he did good to the rich too, for he was full of love to all men, only he saw as the poor were more in want of his help. So he cured the lame and the sick and the blind, and he worked miracles, to feed the hungry, because, he said, he was sorry for them; and he was very kind to the little children, and comforted those who had lost their friends: and he spoke very tenderly to poor sinners that were sorry for their sins.

"Ah! wouldn't you love such a man if you saw him — if he

was here in this village? What a kind heart he must have! what a friend he would be to go to in trouble! How pleasant it must be to be taught by him.

"Well, dear friends, who *was* this man? Was he only a good man—a very good man, and no more—like our dear Mr. Wesley, who has been taken from us? . . . He was the Son of God—in the image of the Father,' the Bible says; that means, just like God, who is the beginning and end of all things—the God we want to know about. So then, all the love that Jesus showed to the poor is the same love that God has for us. We can understand what Jesus felt, because he came in a body like ours, and spoke words such as we speak to each other. We were afraid to think what God was before—the God who made the world and the sky and the thunder and lightning. We could never see him; we could only see the things he had made; and some of these things was very terrible, so as we might well tremble when we thought of him. But our blessed Saviour has showed us what God is in a way us poor ignorant people can understand; he has showed us what God's heart is, what are his feelings towards us.

"But let us see a little more about what Jesus came on earth for. Another time he said, 'I came to seek and to save that which was lost;' and another time, 'I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'

"The *lost*! . . . *Sinners*! . . . Ah! dear friends, does that mean you and me?"

Hitherto the traveller had been chained to the spot against his will by the charm of Dinah's mellow treble tones, which had a variety of modulation like that of a fine instrument touched with the unconscious skill of musical instinct. The simple things she said seemed like novelties, as a melody strikes us with a new feeling when we hear it sung by the pure voice of a boyish chorister; the quiet depth of conviction with which she spoke seemed in itself an evidence for the truth of her message. He saw that she had thoroughly arrested her hearers. The villagers had pressed nearer to her, and there was no longer anything but grave attention on all faces. She spoke slowly, though quite fluently, often pausing after a question, or before any transition of ideas. There was no change of attitude, no gesture; the effect of her speech was produced entirely by the inflections of her voice, and when she came to the question, "Will God take care of us when we die?" she uttered it in such a tone of plaintive appeal that the tears came into some of the hardest eyes.

The stranger had ceased to doubt, as he had done at the first glance, that she could fix the attention of her rougher hearers, but still he wondered whether she could have that power of rousing their more violent emotions, which must surely be a necessary seal of her vocation as a Methodist preacher, until she came to the words, "Lost!—Sinners!" when there was a great change in her voice and manner. She had made a long pause before the exclamation, and the pause seemed to be filled by agitating thoughts that showed themselves in her features. Her pale face became paler; the circles under her eyes deepened, as they do when tears half gather without falling; and the mild loving eyes took an expression of appalled pity, as if she had suddenly discerned a destroying angel hovering over the heads of the people. Her voice became deep and muffled, but there was still no gesture. Nothing could be less like the ordinary type of the Ranter than Dinah. She was not preaching as she heard others preach, but speaking directly from her own emotions, and under the inspiration of her own simple faith.

But now she had entered into a new current of feeling. Her manner became less calm, her utterance more rapid and agitated, as she tried to bring home to the people their guilt, their wilful darkness, their state of disobedience to God—as she dwelt on the lateness of sin, the Divine holiness, and the sufferings of the Saviour, by which a way had been opened for their salvation. At last it seemed as if, in her yearning desire to reclaim the lost sheep, she could not be satisfied by addressing her hearers as a body. She appealed first to one and then to another, beseeching them with tears to turn to God while there was yet time; painting to them the desolation of their souls, lost in sin, feeding on the husks of this miserable world, far away from God their Father; and then the love of the Saviour, who was waiting and watching for their return.

There was many a responsive sigh and groan from her fellow-Methodists, but the village mind does not easily take fire, and a little smouldering vague anxiety, that might easily die out again, was the utmost effect Dinah's preaching had wrought in them at present. Yet no one had retired, except the children and "old Feyther Taft," who being too deaf to catch many words, had some time ago gone back to his ingle-nook. Wiry Ben was feeling very uncomfortable, and almost wishing he had not come to hear Dinah; he thought what she said would haunt him somehow. Yet he couldn't help liking to look at her and listen to her, though he dreaded every

moment that she would fix her eyes on him, and address him in particular. She had already addressed Sandy Jim, who was now holding the baby to relieve his wife, and the big soft-hearted man had rubbed away some tears with his fist, with a confused intention of being a better fellow, going less to the Holly Bush down by the Stone pits, and cleaning himself more regularly of a Sunday.

In front of Sandy Jim stood Chad's Bess, who had shown an unwonted quietude and fixity of attention ever since Dinah had begun to speak. Not that the matter of the discourse had arrested her at once, for she was lost in a puzzling speculation as to what pleasure and satisfaction there could be in life to a young woman who wore a cap like Dinah's. Giving up this inquiry in despair, she took to studying Dinah's nose, eyes, mouth, and hair, and wondering whether it was better to have such a sort of pale face as that, or fat red cheeks and round black eyes like her own. But gradually the influence of the general gravity told upon her, and she became conscious of what Dinah was saying. The gentle tones, the loving persuasion, did not touch her, but when the more severe appeals came she began to be frightened. Poor Bessy had always been considered a naughty girl; she was conscious of it; if it was necessary to be very good, it was clear she must be in a bad way. She couldn't find her places at church as Sally Rann could; she had often been tittering when she "curcheyed" to Mr. Irwino; and these religious deficiencies were accompanied by a corresponding slackness in the minor morals, for Bessy belonged unquestionably to that unsoaped, lazy class of feminine characters with whom you may venture to "eat an egg, an apple, or a nut." All this she was generally conscious of, and hitherto had not been greatly ashamed of it. But now she began to feel very much as if the constable had come to take her up and carry her before the justice for some undefined offence. She had a terrified sense that God, whom she had always thought of as very far off, was very near to her, and that Jesus was close by looking at her, though she could not see him. For Dinah had that belief in visible manifestations of Jesus, which is common among the Methodists, and she communicated it irresistibly to her hearers: she made them feel that he was among them bodily, and might at any moment show himself to them in some way that would strike anguish and penitence into their hearts.

"See!" she exclaimed, turning to the left, with her eyes fixed on a point above the heads of the people — "see where



our blessed Lord stands and weeps, and stretches out his arms towards you. Hear what he says: 'How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' . . . and ye would not," she repeated, in a tone of pleading reproach, turning her eyes on the people again. "See the print of the nails on his dear hands and feet. It is your sins that made them! Ah! how pale and worn he looks! He has gone through all that great agony in the garden, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and the great drops of sweat fell like blood to the ground. They spat upon him and buffeted him, they scourged him, they mocked him, they laid the heavy cross on his bruised shoulders. Then they nailed him up. Ah! what pain! His lips are parched with thirst, and they mock him still in this great agony; yet with those parched lips he prays for them, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Then a horror of great darkness fell upon him, and he felt what sinners feel when they are forever shut out from God. That was the last drop in the cup of bitterness. 'My God, my God!' he cries, 'why hast Thou forsaken me?'

"All this he bore for you! For you — and you never think of him; for you — and you turn your backs on him; you don't care what he has gone through for you. Yet he is not weary of toiling for you: he has risen from the dead, he is praying for you at the right hand of God — 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' And he is upon this earth, too; he is among us; he is there close to you now; I see his wounded body and his look of love."

Here Dinah turned to Bessy Cranage, whose bonny youth and evident vanity had touched her with pity.

"Poor child! poor child! He is beseeching you, and you don't listen to him. You think of ear-rings and fine gowns and caps, and you never think of the Saviour who died to save your precious soul. Your cheeks will be shrivelled one day, your hair will be gray, your poor body will be thin and tottering! Then you will begin to feel that your soul is not saved; then you will have to stand before God dressed in your sins, in your evil tempers and vain thoughts. And Jesus, who stands ready to help you now, won't help you then: because you won't have him to be your Saviour, he will be your judge. Now he looks at you with love and mercy, and says, 'Come to me that you may have life;' then he will turn away from you and say, 'Depart from me into everlasting fire!'"

Poor Bessy's wide-open black eyes began to fill with tears,

her great red cheeks and lips became quite pale, and her face was distorted like a little child's before a burst of crying.

"Ah! poor blind child!" Dinah went on, "think if it should happen to you as it once happened to a servant of God in the days of her vanity. *She* thought of her lace caps, and saved all her money to buy 'em; she thought nothing about how she might get a clean heart and a right spirit, she only wanted to have better lace than other girls. And one day when she put her new cap on and looked in the glass, she saw a bleeding Face crowned with thorns. That face is looking at you now," — here Dinah pointed to a spot close in front of Bessy. — "Ah! tear off those follies! cast them away from you as if they were stinging adders. They *are* stinging you — they are poisoning your soul — they are dragging you down into a dark bottomless pit, where you will sink forever, and forever, and forever, further away from light and God."

Bessy could bear it no longer: a great terror was upon her, and wrenching her ear-rings from her ears, she threw them down before her, sobbing aloud. Her father, Chad, frightened lest he should be "laid hold on" too, this impression on the rebellious Bess striking him as nothing less than a miracle, walked hastily away, and began to work at his anvil by way of reassuring himself. "Folks mun ha' loss-shoes, praichin' or no praichin': the divil cauna lay hould o' me for that," he muttered to himself.

But now Dinah began to tell of the joys that were in store for the penitent, and to describe in her simple way the divine peace and love with which the soul of the believer is filled — how the sense of God's love turns poverty into riches, and satisfies the soul, so that no uneasy desire vexes it, no fear alarms it: how, at last, the very temptation to sin is extinguished, and heaven is begun upon earth, because no cloud passes between the soul and God, who is its eternal sun.

"Dear friends," she said at last, "brothers and sisters, whom I love as those for whom my Lord has died, believe me, I know what this great blessedness is; and because I know it, I want you to have it too. I am poor, like you: I have to get my living with my hands; but no lord nor lady can be so happy as me, if they haven't got the love of God in their souls. Think what it is — not to hate anything but sin; to be full of love to every creature; to be frightened at nothing; to be sure that all things will turn to good; not to mind pain, because it is our Father's will; to know that nothing — no, not if the earth was to be burnt up, or the waters come and drown us —

nothing could part us from God who loves us, and who fills our souls with peace and joy, because we are sure that whatever he wills is holy, just, and good.

"Dear friends, come and take this blessedness; it is offered to you; it is the good news that Jesus came to preach to the poor. It is not like the riches of this world, so that the more one gets the less the rest can have. God is without end; his love is without end—

'Its streams the whole creation reach,  
So plenteous is the store;  
Enough for all, enough for each,  
Enough for evermore.'"

Dinah had been speaking at least an hour, and the reddening light of the parting day seemed to give a solemn emphasis to her closing words. The stranger, who had been interested in the course of her sermon, as if it had been the development of a drama—for there is this sort of fascination in all sincere unpremeditated eloquence, which opens to one the inward drama of the speaker's emotions—now turned his horse aside, and pursued his way, while Dinah said, "Let us sing a little, dear friends;" and as he was still winding down the slope, the voices of the Methodists reached him, rising and falling in that strange blending of exultation and sadness which belongs to the cadence of a hymn.

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## CHAPTER III.

### AFTER THE PREACHING.

IN less than an hour from that time Seth Bede was walking by Dinah's side along the hedgerow-path that skirted the pastures and green corn-fields which lay between the village and the Hall Farm. Dinah had taken off her little Quaker bonnet again, and was holding it in her hands that she might have a freer enjoyment of the cool evening twilight, and Seth could see the expression of her face quite clearly as he walked by her side, timidly revolving something he wanted to say to her. It was an expression of unconscious placid gravity—of absorption in thoughts that had no connection with the present moment or with her own personality: an expression that is most of all discouraging to a lover. Her very walk was dis-

couraging: it had that quiet elasticity that asks for no support. Seth felt this dimly; he said to himself, "She's too good and holy for any man, let alone me," and the words he had been summoning rushed back again before they had reached his lips. But another thought gave him courage: "There's no man could love her better, and leave her freer to follow the Lord's work." They had been silent for many minutes now, since they had done talking about Bessy Cranage; Dinah seemed almost to have forgotten Seth's presence, and her pace was becoming so much quicker, that the sense of their being only a few minutes' walk from the yard-gates of the Hall Farm at last gave Seth courage to speak.

"You've quite made up your mind to go back to Snowfield o' Saturday, Dinah?"

"Yes," said Dinah, quietly. "I'm called there. It was borne in upon my mind while I was meditating on Sunday night, as Sister Allen, who's in a decline, is in need of me. I saw her as plain as we see that bit of thin white cloud, lifting up her poor thin hand and beckoning to me. And this morning when I opened the Bible for direction, the first words my eyes fell on were, 'And after we had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia.' If it wasn't for that clear showing of the Lord's will I should be loath to go, for my heart yearns over my aunt and her little ones, and that poor wandering lamb Hetty Sorrel. I've been much drawn out in prayer for her of late, and I look on it as a token that there may be mercy in store for her."

"God grant it," said Seth. "For I doubt Adam's heart is so set on her, he'll never turn to anybody else; and yet it 'ud go to my heart if he was to marry her, for I canna think as she'd make him happy. It's a deep mystery—the way the heart of man turns to one woman out of all the rest he's seen i' the world, and makes it easier for him to work seven year for *her*, like Jacob did for Rachel, sooner than have any other woman for th' asking. I often think of them words, 'And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her.' I know those words 'ud come true with me, Dinah, if so be you'd give me hope as I might win you after seven years was over. I know you think a husband 'ud be taking up too much o' your thoughts, because St. Paul says, 'She that's married careth for the things of the world how she may please her husband;' and may happen you'll think me over-bold to speak to you about it again, after what you told me o' your mind last Saturday. But I've

been thinking it over again by night and by day, and I've prayed not to be blinded by my own desires, to think what's only good for me must be good for you too. And it seems to me there's more texts for your marrying than ever you can find against it. For St. Paul says as plain as can be in another place, 'I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully;' and then 'two are better than one;' and that holds good with marriage as well as with other things. For we should be o' one heart and o' one mind, Dinah. We both serve the same Master, and are striving after the same gifts; and I'd never be the husband to make a claim on you as could interfere with your doing the work God has fitted you for. I'd make a shift, and fend indoor and out, to give you more liberty — more than you can have now, for you've got to get your own living now, and I'm strong enough to work for us both."

When Seth had once begun to urge his suit, he went on earnestly, and almost hurriedly, lest Dinah should speak some decisive word before he had poured forth all the arguments he had prepared. His cheeks became flushed as he went on, his mild gray eyes filled with tears, and his voice trembled as he spoke the last sentence. They had reached one of those very narrow passes between two tall stones, which performed the office of a stile in Loamshire, and Dinah paused as she turned towards Seth and said, in her tender but calm treble notes, —

"Seth Bede, I thank you for your love towards me, and if I could think of any man as more than a Christian brother, I think it would be you. But my heart is not free to marry. That is good for other women, and it is a great and a blessed thing to be a wife and mother; but 'as God has distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every man, so let him walk.' God has called me to minister to others, not to have any joys or sorrows of my own, but to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with those that weep. He has called me to speak his word, and he has greatly owned my work. It could only be on a very clear showing that I could leave the brethren and sisters at Snowfield, who are favored with very little of this world's good; where the trees are few, so that a child might count them, and there's very hard living for the poor in the winter. It has been given me to help, to comfort, and strengthen the little flock there, and to call in many wanderers; and my soul is filled with these things from my rising up till my lying down. My life is too short, and God's work is too great for me to think of making a home for myself in this

world. I've not turned a deaf ear to your words, Seth, for when I saw as your love was given to me, I thought it might be a leading of Providence for me to change my way of life, and that we should be fellow-helpers; and I spread the matter before the Lord. But whenever I tried to fix my mind on marriage, and our living together, other thoughts always came in — the times when I've prayed by the sick and dying, and the happy hours I've had preaching, when my heart was filled with love, and the Word was given to me abundantly. And when I've opened the Bible for direction, I've always lighted on some clear word to tell me where my work lay. I believe what you say, Seth, that you would try to be a help and not a hindrance to my work; but I see that our marriage is not God's will — He draws my heart another way. I desire to live and die without husband or children. I seem to have no room in my soul for wants and fears of my own, it has pleased God to fill my heart so full with the wants and sufferings of his poor people."

Seth was unable to reply, and they walked on in silence. At last, as they were nearly at the yard-gate, he said, —

"Well, Dinah, I must seek for strength to bear it, and to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. But I feel now how weak my faith is. It seems as if, when you are gone, I could never joy in anything any more. I think it's something passing the love of women as I feel for you, for I could be content without your marrying me if I could go and live at Snowfield, and be near you. I trusted as the strong love God had given me towards you was a leading for us both; but it seems it was only meant for my trial. Perhaps I feel more for you than I ought to feel for any creature, for I often can't help saying of you what the hymn says —

'In darkest shades if she appear,  
My dawning is begun;  
She is my soul's bright morning-star,  
And she my rising sun.'

That may be wrong, and I am to be taught better. But you wouldn't be displeased with me if things turned out so as I could leave this country and go to live at Snowfield?"

"No, Seth; but I counsel you to wait patiently, and not lightly to leave your own country and kindred. Do nothing without the Lord's clear bidding. It's a bleak and barren country there, not like this land of Goshen you've been used to. We mustn't be in a hurry to fix and choose our own lot; we must wait to be guided."

"But you'd let me write you a letter, Dinah, if there was anything I wanted to tell you?"

"Yes, sure; let me know if you're in any trouble. You'll be continually in my prayers."

They had now reached the yard-gate, and Seth said, "I won't go in, Dinah; so farewell." He paused and hesitated after she had given him her hand, and then said, "There's no knowing but what you may see things different after awhile. There may be a new leading."

"Let us leave that, Seth. It's good to live only a moment at a time, as I've read in one of Mr. Wesley's books. It isn't for you and me to lay plans; we've nothing to do but to obey and to trust. Farewell."

Dinah pressed his hand with rather a sad look in her loving eyes, and then passed through the gate, while Seth turned away to walk lingeringly home. But instead of taking the direct road, he chose to turn back along the fields through which he and Dinah had already passed; and I think his blue linen handkerchief was very wet with tears long before he had made up his mind that it was time for him to set his face steadily homewards. He was but three-and-twenty, and had only just learned what it is to love — to love with that adoration which a young man gives to a woman whom he feels to be greater and better than himself. Love of this sort is hardly distinguishable from religious feeling. What deep and worthy love is so? whether of woman or child, or art or music. Our caresses, our tender words, our still rapture under the influence of autumn sunsets, or pillared vistas, calm majestic statues, or Beethoven symphonies, all bring with them the consciousness that they are mere waves and ripples in an unfathomable ocean of love and beauty; our emotion in its keenest moment passes from expression into silence, our love at its highest flood rushes beyond its object, and loses itself in the sense of divine mystery. And this blessed gift of venerating love has been given to too many humble craftsmen since the world began, for us to feel any surprise that it should have existed in the soul of a Methodist carpenter half a century ago, while there was yet a lingering after-glow from the time when Wesley and his fellow-laborer fed on the hips and haws of the Cornwall hedges, after exhausting limbs and lungs in carrying a divine message to the poor.

That after-glow has long faded away; and the picture we are apt to make of Methodism in our imagination is not an

amphitheatre of green hills, or the deep shade of broad-leaved sycamores, where a crowd of rough men and weary-hearted women drank in a faith which was a rudimentary culture, which linked their thoughts with the past, lifted their imagination above the sordid details of their own narrow lives, and suffused their souls with the sense of a pitying, loving, infinite Presence, sweet as summer to the houseless needy. It is too possible that to some of my readers Methodism may mean nothing more than low-pitched gables up dingy streets, sleek grocers, sponging preachers, and hypocritical jargon — elements which are regarded as an exhaustive analysis of Methodism in many fashionable quarters.

That would be a pity: for I cannot pretend that Seth and Dinah were anything else than Methodists — not indeed of that modern type which reads quarterly reviews and attends in chapels with pillared porticoes; but of a very old-fashioned kind. They believed in present miracles, in instantaneous conversions, in revelations by dreams and visions; they drew lots, and sought for Divine guidance by opening the Bible at hazard; having a literal way of interpreting the Scriptures, which is not at all sanctioned by approved commentators; and it is impossible for me to represent their diction as correct, or their instruction as liberal. Still — if I have read religious history aright — faith, hope, and charity have not always been found in a direct ratio with a sensibility to the three concords; and it is possible, thank Heaven! to have very erroneous theories and very sublime feelings. The raw bacon which clumsy Molly spares from her own scanty store, that she may carry it to her neighbor's child to "stop the fits," may be a piteously inefficacious remedy; but the generous stirring of neighborly kindness that prompted the deed has a beneficent radiation that is not lost.

Considering these things, we can hardly think Dinah and Seth beneath our sympathy, accustomed as we may be to weep over the loftier sorrows of heroines in satin boots and crinoline, and of heroes riding fiery horses, themselves ridden by still more fiery passions.

Poor Seth! he was never on horseback in his life except once, when he was a little lad, and Mr. Jonathan Burge took him up behind, telling him to "hold on tight;" and instead of bursting out into wild accusing apostrophes to God and destiny, he is resolving, as he now walks homeward under the solemn starlight, to repress his sadness, to be less bent on having his own will, and to live more for others, as Dinah does.



## CHAPTER IV.

## HOME AND ITS SORROWS.

A GREEN valley with a brook running through it, full almost to overflowing with the late rains; overhung by low stooping willows. Across this brook a plank is thrown, and over this plank Adam Bede is passing with his undoubting step, followed close by Gyp with the basket; evidently making his way to the thatched house, with a stack of timber by the side of it, about twenty yards up the opposite slope.

The door of the house is open, and an elderly woman is looking out; but she is not placidly contemplating the evening sunshine; she has been watching with dim eyes the gradually enlarging speck which for the last few minutes she has been quite sure is her darling son Adam. Lisbeth Bede loves her son with the love of a woman to whom her first-born has come late in life. She is an anxious, spare, yet vigorous old woman, clean as a snowdrop. Her gray hair is turned neatly back under a pure linen cap with a black band round it; her broad chest is covered with a buff neckerchief, and below this you see a sort of short bed-gown made of blue-checked linen, tied round the waist and descending to the hips, from whence there is a considerable length of linsey-woolsey petticoat. For Lisbeth is tall, and in other points too there is a strong likeness between her and her son Adam. Her dark eyes are somewhat dim now—perhaps from too much crying—but her broadly-marked eyebrows are still black, her teeth are sound, and as she stands knitting rapidly and unconsciously with her work-hardened hands, she has as firmly-upright an attitude as when she is carrying a pail of water on her head from the spring. There is the same type of frame and the same keen activity of temperament in mother and son, but it was not from her that Adam got his well-filled brow and his expression of large-hearted intelligence.

Family likeness has often a deep sadness in it. Nature, that great tragic dramatist, knits us together by bone and muscle, and divides us by the subtler web of our brains; blends yearning and repulsion; and ties us by our heart-

strings to the beings that jar us at every movement. We hear a voice with the very cadence of our own uttering the thoughts we despise; we see eyes—ah! so like our mother's—averted from us in cold alienation; and our last darling child startles us with the air and gestures of the sister we parted from in bitterness long years ago. The father to whom we owe our best heritage—the mechanical instinct, the keen sensibility to harmony, the unconscious skill of the modelling hand—galls us, and puts us to shame by his daily errors; the long-lost mother, whose face we begin to see in the glass as our own wrinkles come, once fretted our young souls with her anxious humors and irrational persistence.

It is such a fond anxious mother's voice that you hear, as Lisbeth says—

"Well, my lad, it's gone seven by th' clock. Thee't allays stay till the last child's born. Thee wants thy supper, I'll warrand. Where's Seth? gone arter some o's chapellin', I reckon?"

"Ay, ay, Seth's at no harm, mother, thee mayst be sure. But where's father?" said Adam quickly as he entered the house and glanced into the room on the left hand, which was used as a workshop. "Ifasn't he done the coffin for Tholer? There's the stuff standing just as I left it this morning."

"Done the coffin?" said Lisbeth, following him, and knitting uninterruptedly, though she looked at her son very anxiously. "Eh, my lad, he went aff to Truddles'on this forenoon, an's niver come back. I doubt he's got to th' 'Waggin Overthrow' again."

A deep flush of anger passed rapidly over Adam's face. He said nothing, but threw off his jacket, and began to roll up his shirt-sleeves again.

"What art goin' to do, Adam?" said the mother, with a tone and look of alarm. "Thee wouldstna go to work again, wi'out ha'in thy bit o' supper?"

Adam, too angry to speak, walked into the workshop. But his mother threw down her knitting, and, hurrying after him, took hold of his arm, and said, in a tone of plaintive remonstrance,—

"Nay, my lad, my lad, thee munna go wi'out thy supper; there's the taters wi' the gravy in 'em, just as thee lik'st them. I saved 'em o' purpose for thee. Come an' ha' thy supper, come."

"Let be!" said Adam impetuously, shaking her off, and

seizing one of the planks that stood against the wall. "It's fine talking about having supper when here's a coffin promised to be ready at Brox'on by seven o'clock to-morrow morn'g, and ought to ha' been there now, and not a nail struck yet. My throat's too full to swallow victuals."

"Why, thee canstna get the coffin ready," said Lisbeth. "Thee't work thyself to death. It 'ud take thee all night to do't."

"What signifies how long it takes me? Isn't the coffin promised? Can they bury the man without a coffin? I'd work my right hand off sooner than deceive people with lies i' that way. It makes me mad to think on't. I shall overrun these doings before long. I've stood enough of 'em."

Poor Lisbeth did not hear this threat for the first time, and if she had been wise she would have gone away quietly, and said nothing for the next hour. But one of the lessons a woman most rarely learns, is never to talk to an angry or a drunken man. Lisbeth sat down on the chopping bench and began to cry, and by the time she had cried enough to make her voice very piteous, she burst out into words.

"Nay, my lad, my lad, thee wouldstna go away an' break thy mother's heart, an' leave thy feyther to ruin. Thee wouldstna ha' 'em carry me to th' church-yard, an' thee not to follow me. I shanna rest i' my grave if I donna see thee at th' last; an' how's they to let thee know as I'm a-dyin', if thee't gone a-workin' i' distant parts, an' Seth belike gone arter thee, and thy feyther not able to hold a pen for's hand shakin', besides not knowin' where thee art? Thee mun forgie thy feyther—thee munna be so bitter again' him. He war a good feyther to thee afore he took to th' drink. He's a clever workman, an' taught thee thy trade, remember, an's niver gen me a blow nor so much as an ill word—no, not even in's drink. Thee wouldstna ha' 'm go to the workhus—thy own feyther—an' him as was a fine-growed man an' handy at everythin' amost as thee art thyself, five-an'-twenty 'ear ago, when thee wast a baby at the breast."

Lisbeth's voice became louder, and choked with sobs: a sort of wail, the most irritating of all sounds where real sorrows are to be borne, and real work to be done. Adam broke in impatiently.

"Now, mother, don't cry and talk so. Haven't I got enough to vex me without that? What's th' use o' telling me things as I only think too much on every day? If I didna think on 'em why should I do as I do, for the sake o'

keeping things together here? But I hate to be talking where it's no use: I like to keep my breath for doing instead o' talking."

"I know thee dost things as nobody else 'nd do, my lad. But thee't allays so hard upo' thy feyther, Adam. Thee think'st nothing too much to do for Seth: thee snapp'st me up if iver I find faut wi' th' lad. But thee't so angered wi' thy feyther, more nor wi' anybody else."

"That's better than speaking soft, and letting things go the wrong way, I reckon, isn't it? If I wasn't sharp with him, he'd sell every bit o' stuff i' th' yard, and spend it on drink. I know there's a duty to be done by my father, but it isn't my duty to encourage him in running headlong to ruin. And what has Seth got to do with it? The lad does no harm as I know of. But leave me alone, mother, and let me get on with the work."

Lisbeth dared not say any more; but she got up and called Gyp, thinking to console herself somewhat for Adam's refusal of the supper she had spread out in the loving expectation of looking at him while he ate it, by feeding Adam's dog with extra liberality. But Gyp was watching his master with wrinkled brow and ears erect, puzzled at this unusual course of things; and though he glanced at Lisbeth when she called him, and moved his fore-paws uneasily, well knowing that she was inviting him to supper, he was in a divided state of mind, and remained seated on his haunches, again fixing his eyes anxiously on his master. Adam noticed Gyp's mental conflict, and though his anger had made him less tender than usual to his mother, it did not prevent him from caring as much as usual for his dog. We are apt to be kinder to the brutes that love us than to the women that love us. Is it because the brutes are dumb?

"Go, Gyp; go, lad!" Adam said, in a tone of encouraging command; and Gyp, apparently satisfied that duty and pleasure were one, followed Lisbeth into the house-place.

But no sooner had he licked up his supper than he went back to his master, while Lisbeth sat down alone to cry over her knitting. Women who are never bitter and resentful are often the most querulous; and if Solomon was as wise as he is reputed to be, I feel sure that when he compared a contentious woman to a continual dropping on a very rainy day, he had not a vixen in his eye—a fury with long nails, acrid and selfish. Depend upon it, he meant a good creature, who had no joy but in the happiness of the loved ones whom she

contributed to make uncomfortable, putting by all the tid-bits for them, and spending nothing on herself. Such a woman as Lisbeth, for example—at once patient and complaining, self-renouncing and exacting, brooding the livelong day over what happened yesterday, and what is likely to happen to-morrow, and crying very readily both at the good and the evil. But a certain awe mingled itself with her idolatrous love of Adam, and when he said, "Leave me alone," she was always silenced.

So the hours passed, to the loud ticking of the old day-clock and the sound of Adam's tools. At last he called for a light and a draught of water (beer was a thing only to be drunk on holidays), and Lisbeth ventured to say as she took it in, "Thy supper stans ready for thee, when thee lik'st."

"Donna thee sit up, mother," said Adam, in a gentle tone. He had worked off his anger now, and whenever he wished to be especially kind to his mother, he fell into his strongest native accent and dialect, with which at other times his speech was less deeply tinged. "I'll see to father when he comes home; maybe he wouna come at all to-night. I shall be easier if thee't i' bed."

"Nay, I'll bide till Seth comes. He wouna be long now, I reckon."

It was then past nine by the clock, which was always in advance of the day, and before it had struck ten the latch was lifted and Seth entered. He had heard the sound of the tools as he was approaching.

"Why, mother," he said, "how is it as father's working so late?"

"It's none o' thy feyther as is a-workin'—thee might know that well anooft if thy head warna full o' chapellin'—it's thy brother as does iverything, for there's niver nobody else i' th' way to do nothin'."

Lisbeth was going on, for she was not at all afraid of Seth, and usually poured into his ears all the querulousness which was repressed by her awe of Adam. Seth had never in his life spoken a harsh word to his mother, and timid people always wreak their peevishness on the gentle. But Seth, with an anxious look, had passed into the workshop and said,—

"Addy, how's this? What! father's forgot the coffin?"

"Ay, lad, th' old tale; but I shall get it done," said Adam, looking up, and casting one of his bright keen glances at his brother. "Why, what's the matter with thee? Thee't in trouble."

Seth's eyes were red, and there was a look of deep depression on his mild face.

"Yes, Addy, but it's what must be borne, and can't be helped. Why, thee'st never been to the school, then?"

"School? no; that screw can wait," said Adam, hammering away again.

"Let me take my turn now, and do thee go to bed," said Seth.

"No, lad, I'd rather go on, now I'm in harness. Thee't help me to carry it to Brox'on when it's done. I'll call thee up at sunrise. Go and eat thy supper, and shut the door, so as I mayn't hear mother's talk."

Seth knew that Adam always meant what he said, and was not to be persuaded into meaning anything else. So he turned, with rather a heavy heart, into the house-place.

"Adam's niver touched a bit o' victual sin' home he's come," said Lisbeth. "I reckon thee'st hed thy supper at some o' thy Methody folks."

"Nay, mother," said Seth, "I've had no supper yet."

"Come, then," said Lisbeth, "but donna thee ate the taters, for Adam 'ull happen ate 'em if I leave 'em stannin'. He loves a bit o' taters an' gravy. But he's been so sore an' angered, he wouldn't ate 'em, for all I'd putten 'em by o' purpose for him. An' he's been a-threatenin' to go away again," she went on, whimpering, "an' I'm fast sure he'll go some dawning afore I'm up, an' niver let me know aforehand, an' he'll niver come back again when once he's gone. An' I'd better niver ha' had a son, as is like no other body's son for the deftness an' th' handiness, an' so looked on by th' grit folks, an' tall an' upright like a poplar-tree, an' me to be parted from him, an' niver see 'm no more."

"Como, mother, donna grieve thyself in vain," said Seth, in a soothing voice. "Thee'st not half so good reason to think as Adam 'ull go away as to think he'll stay with thee. He may say such a thing when he's in wrath—and he's got excuse for being wrathful sometimes—but his heart 'ud never let him go. Think how he's stood by us all when it's been none so easy—paying his savings to free me from going for a soldier, an' turnin' his earnins into wood for father, when he's got plenty o' uses for his money, and many a young man like him 'ud ha' been married and settled before now. He'll never turn round and knock down his own work, and forsake them as it's been the labor of his life to stand by."

"Donna talk to me about's marr'in'" said Lisbeth, crying afresh. "He's set's heart on that Hetty Sorrel, as 'ull niver save a penny, an' 'ull toss up her head at's old mother. An' to think as he might ha' Mary Burge, an' be took partners, an' be a big man wi' workmen under him, like Mester Burge—Dolly's told me so o'er and o'er again—if it warn't as he's set's heart on that bit of a wench, as is o' no more use nor the gillyflower on the wall. An' he so wise at bookin' an' figurin', an' not to know no better nor that!"

"But, mother, thee know'st we canna love just where other folks 'ud have us. There's nobody but God can control the heart of man. I could ha' wished myself as Adam could ha' made another choice, but I wouldn't reproach him for what he can't help. And I'm not sure but what he tries to o'ercome it. But it's a matter as he doesn't like to be spoke to about, and I can only pray to the Lord to bless and direct him."

"Ay, thee't allays ready enough at prayin', but I donna see as thee gets much wi' thy prayin'. Thee wotna get double earnins o' this side Yule. Th' Methodies 'll niver make thee half the man thy brother is, for all they're a-makin' a preacher on thee."

"It's partly truth thee speak'st there, mother," said Seth, mildly; "Adam's far before me, an's done more for me than I can ever do for him. God distributes talents to every man according as He sees good. But thee mustna undervally prayer. Prayer mayna bring money, but it brings us what no money can buy—a power to keep from sin, and be content with God's will, whatever He may please to send. If thee wouldst pray to God to help thee, and trust in His goodness, thee wouldstna be so uneasy about things."

"Unaisy? I'm i' th' right on't to be unaisy. It's well seen on thee what it is niver to be unaisy. Thee't gi' away all thy earnins, an' niver be unaisy as thee'st nothin' laid up again' a rainy day. If Adam had been as aisy as thee, he'd niver ha' had no money to pay for thee. Take no thought for the morrow—take no thought—that's what thee't allays sayin'; an' what comes on't? Why, as Adam has to take thought for thee."

"Those are the words o' the Bible, mother," said Seth. "They don't mean as we should be idle. They mean we shouldn't be over anxious and worreting ourselves about what'll happen to-morrow, but do our duty, and leave the rest to God's will."

"Ay, ay, that's the way wi' thee: thee allays makes a peck o' thy own words out o' a pint o' the Bible's. I donna see how thee't to know as 'take no thought for the morrow' means all that. An' when the Bible's such a big book, an' thee canst read all thro't, an' ha' the pick o' the texes, I canna think why thee dostna pick better words as donna mean so much more nor they say. Adam doesna pick a that'n; I can understan' the tex as he's allays a-sayin', 'God helps them as helps theirsens.'"

"Nay, mother," said Seth, "that's no text o' the Bible. It comes out of a book as Adam picked up at the stall at Tred-dles'on. It was wrote by a knowing man, but over-worldly, I doubt. However, that saying's partly true; for the Bible tells us we must be workers together with God."

"Well, how'm I to know? It sounds like a tex. But what's th' matter wi' th' lad? Thee't hardly atin' a bit o' supper. Dostna mean to ha' no more nor that bit o' out-cake? An' thee lookst as white as a flick o' new bacon. What's th' matter wi' thee?"

"Nothing to mind about, mother; I'm not hungry. I'll just look in at Adam again, and see if he'll let me go on with the coffin."

"Ha' a drop o' warm broth?" said Lisbeth, whose motherly feeling now got the better of her "nattering" habit. "I'll set two-three sticks a-light in a minute."

"Nay, mother, thank thee; thee't very good," said Seth, gratefully; and encouraged by this touch of tenderness, he went on: "Let me pray a bit with thee for father, and Adam, and all of us—it'll comfort thee, happen, more than thee thinkst."

"Well, I've nothin' to say again' it."

Lisbeth, though disposed always to take the negative side in her conversations with Seth, had a vague sense that there was some comfort and safety in the fact of his piety, and that it somehow relieved her from the trouble of any spiritual transactions on her own behalf.

So the mother and son knelt down together, and Seth prayed for the poor wandering father, and for those who were sorrowing for him at home. And when he came to the petition that Adam might never be called to set up his tent in a far country, but that his mother might be cheered and comforted by his presence all the days of her pilgrimage, Lisbeth's ready tears flowed again, and she wept aloud.

When they rose from their knees, Seth went to Adam



again, and said, "Wilt only lie down for an hour or two, and let me go on the while?"

"No, Seth, no. Make mother go to bed, and go thyself."

Meantime Lisbeth had dried her eyes, and now followed Seth, holding something in her hands. It was the brown-and-yellow platter containing the baked potatoes with the gravy in them and bits of meat which she had cut and mixed among them. Those were dear times, when wheaten bread and fresh meat were delicacies to working people. She set the dish down rather timidly on the bench by Adam's side, and said, "Thee canst pick a bit while thee't workin'. I'll bring thee another drop o' water."

"Ay, mother, do," said Adam, kindly; "I'm getting very thirsty."

In half an hour all was quiet; no sound was to be heard in the house but the loud ticking of the old day-clock, and the ringing of Adam's tools. The night was very still: when Adam opened the door to look out at twelve o'clock, the only motion seemed to be in the glowing, twinkling stars; every blade of grass was asleep.

Bodily haste and exertion usually leave our thoughts very much at the mercy of our feelings and imagination; and it was so to-night with Adam. While his muscles were working lustily, his mind seemed as passive as a spectator at a diorama: scenes of the sad past, and probably sad future, floating before him, and giving place one to the other in swift succession.

He saw how it would be to-morrow morning, when he had carried the coffin to Broxton and was at home again, having his breakfast: his father perhaps would come in ashamed to meet his son's glance — would sit down, looking older and more tottering than he had done the morning before, and hang down his head, examining the floor-quarries; while Lisbeth would ask him how he supposed the coffin had been got ready, that he had slinked off and left undone — for Lisbeth was always the first to utter the word of reproach, although she cried at Adam's severity towards his father.

"So it will go on, worsening and worsening," thought Adam; "there's no slipping up-hill again, and no standing still when once you've begun to slip down." And then the day came back to him when he was a little fellow and used to run by his father's side, proud to be taken out to work, and prouder still to hear his father boasting to his fellow-workmen how "the little chap had an uncommon notion

o' carpentering." What a fine active fellow his father was then! When people asked Adam whose little lad he was, he had a sense of distinction as he answered, "I'm Thias Bede's lad" — he was quite sure everybody knew Thias Bede: didn't he make the wonderful pigeon-house at Broxton parsonage? Those were happy days, especially when Seth, who was three years the younger, began to go out working too, and Adam began to be a teacher as well as a learner. But then came the days of sadness, when Adam was someway on in his teens, and Thias began to loiter at the public-houses, and Lisbeth began to cry at home, and to pour forth her complaints in the hearing of her sons. Adam remembered well the night of shame and anguish when he first saw his father quite wild and foolish, shouting a song out fitfully among his drunken companions at the "Waggon Overthrown." He had run away once when he was only eighteen, making his escape in the morning twilight with a little blue bundle over his shoulder, and his "mensuration book" in his pocket, and saying to himself very decidedly that he could bear the vexations of home no longer — he would go and seek his fortune, setting up his stick at the crossways and bending his steps the way it fell. But by the time he got to Stoniton, the thought of his mother and Seth left behind to endure everything without him, became too importunate, and his resolution failed him. He came back the next day, but the misery and terror his mother had gone through in those two days had haunted her ever since.

"No!" Adam said to himself to-night, "that must never happen again. It 'ud make a poor balance when my doings are cast up at the last, if my poor old mother stood o' the wrong side. My back's broad enough and strong enough; I should be no better than a coward to go away and leave the troubles to be borne by them as aren't half so able. 'They that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of those that are weak, and not to please themselves.' There's a text wants no candle to show't; it shines by its own light. It's plain enough you get into the wrong road i' this life if you run after this and that only for the sake o' making things easy and pleasant to yourself. A pig may poke his nose into the trough and think o' nothing outside it; but if you've got a man's heart and soul in you, you can't be easy a-making your own bed an' leaving the rest to lie on the stones. Nay, nay, I'll never slip my neck out o' the yoke, and leave the load to be drawn by the weak uns. Father's a sore cross to me, an's likely to be for

many a long year to come. What then? I've got the health, and the limbs, and the sperrit to bear it."

At this moment a smart rap, as if with a willow wand, was given at the house door, and Gyp, instead of barking, as might have been expected, gave a loud howl. Adam, very much startled, went at once to the door and opened it. Nothing was there; all was still, as when he opened it an hour before; the leaves were motionless, and the light of the stars showed the placid fields on both sides of the brook quite empty of visible life. Adam walked round the house, and still saw nothing except a rat which darted into the woodshed as he passed. He went in again, wondering; the sound was so peculiar, that the moment he heard it, it called up the image of the willow wand striking the door. He could not help a little shudder, as he remembered how often his mother had told him of just such a sound coming as a sign when some one was dying. Adam was not a man to be gratuitously superstitious; but he had the blood of the peasant in him as well as of the artisan, and a peasant can no more help believing in a traditional superstition than a horse can help trembling when he sees a camel. Besides, he had that mental combination which is at once humble in the region of mystery, and keen in the region of knowledge: it was the depth of his reverence quite as much as his hard common-sense, which gave him his disinclination to doctrinal religion, and he often checked Seth's argumentative spiritualism by saying, "Eh, it's a big mystery; thee knows't but little about it." And so it happened that Adam was at once penetrating and credulous. If a new building had fallen down and he had been told that this was a divine judgment, he would have said, "May be; but the bearing o' the roof and walls wasn't right, else it wouldn't ha' come down;" yet he believed in dreams and prognostics, and to his dying day he bated his breath a little when he told the story of the stroke with the willow wand. I tell it as he told it, not attempting to reduce it to its natural elements: in our eagerness to explain impressions, we often lose our hold of the sympathy that comprehends them.

But he had the best antidote against imaginative dread in the necessity for getting on with the coffin, and for the next ten minutes his hammer was ringing so uninterruptedly, that other sounds, if there were any, might well be overpowered. A pause came, however, when he had to take up his ruler, and now again came the strange rap, and again Gyp howled.

Adam was at the door without the loss of a moment; but again all was still, and the starlight showed there was nothing but the dew-laden grass in front of the cottage.

Adam for a moment thought uncomfortably about his father; but of late years he had never come home at dark hours from Treddleston, and there was every reason for believing that he was then sleeping off his drunkenness at the "Waggon Overthrown." Besides, to Adam, the conception of the future was so inseparable from the painful image of his father, that the fear of any fatal accident to him was excluded by the deeply-infixed fear of his continual degradation. The next thought that occurred to him was one that made him slip off his shoes and tread lightly up-stairs, to listen at the bedroom doors. But both Seth and his mother were breathing regularly.

Adam came down and set to work again, saying to himself, "I won't open the door again. It's no use staring about to catch sight of a sound. Maybe there's a world about us as we can't see, but th' ear's quicker than the eye, and catches a sound from't now and then. Some people think they get a sight on't too, but they're mostly folks whose eyes are not much use to 'em at anything else. For my part, I think it's better to see when your perpendicular's true, than to see a ghost."

Such thoughts as these are apt to grow stronger and stronger as daylight quenches the candles and the birds begin to sing. By the time the red sunlight shone on the brass nails that formed the initials on the lid of the coffin, my lingering foreboding from the sound of the willow waul was merged in satisfaction that the work was done and the promise redeemed. There was no need to call Seth, for he was already moving overhead, and presently came downstairs.

"Now, lad," said Adam, as Seth made his appearance, "the coffin's done, and we can take it over to Brox'on, and be back again before half after six. I'll take a mouthful o' oat-cake, and then we'll be off."

The coffin was soon propped on the tall shoulders of the two brothers, and they were making their way, followed close by Gyp, out of the little woodyard into the lane at the back of the house. It was but about a mile and a half to Broxton over the opposite slope, and their road wound very pleasantly along lanes and across fields, where the pale woodbines and the dog-roses were scenting the hedgerows, and the birds were twittering and trilling in the tall leafy boughs of oak and elm. It was a strangely-mingled picture—the fresh

youth of the summer morning, with its Eden-like peace and loveliness, the stalwart strength of the two brothers in their rusty working clothes, and the long coffin on their shoulders. They paused for the last time before a small farmhouse outside the village of Broxton. By six o'clock the task was done, the coffin nailed down, and Adam and Seth were on their way home. They chose a shorter way homeward, which would take them across the fields and the brook in front of the house. Adam had not mentioned to Seth what had happened in the night, but he still retained sufficient impression from it himself to say,—

"Seth, lad, if father isn't come home by the time we've had our breakfast, I think it'll be as well for thee to go over to Treddles'on and look after him, and thee canst get me the brass wire I want. Never mind about losing an hour at thy work; we can make that up. What dost say?"

"I'm willing," said Seth. "But see what clouds have gathered since we set out. I'm thinking we shall have more rain. It'll be a sore time for th' haymaking if the meadows are flooded again. The brook's fine and full now: another day's rain 'ud cover the plank, and we should have to go round by the road."

They were coming across the valley now, and had entered the pasture through which the brook ran.

"Why, what's that sticking against the willow?" continued Seth, beginning to walk faster. Adam's heart rose to his mouth: the vague anxiety about his father was changed into a great dread. He made no answer to Seth, but ran forward, preceded by Gyp, who began to bark uneasily; and in two moments he was at the bridge.

This was what the omen meant, then! And the gray-haired father, of whom he had thought with a sort of hardness a few hours ago, as certain to live to be a thorn in his side, was perhaps even then struggling with that watery death! This was the first thought that flashed through Adam's conscience, before he had time to seize the coat and drag out the tall heavy body. Seth was already by his side, helping him, and when they had it on the bank, the two sons in the first moments knelt and looked with mute awe at the glazed eyes, forgetting that there was need for action—forgetting everything but that their father lay dead before them. Adam was the first to speak.

"I'll run to mother," he said, in a loud whisper. "I'll be back to thee in a minute."

Poor Lisbeth was busy preparing her sons' breakfast, and their porridge was already steaming on the fire. Her kitchen always looked the pink of cleanliness, but this morning she was more than usually bent on making her hearth and breakfast-table look comfortable and inviting.

"The lads 'ull be fine an' hungry," she said, half aloud, as she stirred the porridge. "It's a good step to Brox'on, an' it's hungry air o'er the hill — wi' that heavy coffin too. Eh! it's heavier now, wi' poor Bob Tholer in't. Howiver, I've made a drap more porridge nor common this mornin'. The feyther 'ull happen come in arter a bit. Not as he'll ate much porridge. He swallows sixpenn'orth o' ale, an' saves a hap'orth o' porridge — that's his way o' layin' by money, as I've told him many a time, an' am likely to tell him again afore the day's out. Eh! poor mon, he takes it quiet enough; there's no denyin' that."

But now Lisbeth heard the heavy "thud" of a running footstep on the turf, and, turning quickly towards the door, she saw Adam enter, looking so pale and overwhelmed that she screamed aloud and rushed towards him before he had time to speak.

"Hush, mother," Adam said, rather hoarsely, "don't be frightened. Father's tumbled into the water. Belike we may bring him round again. Seth and me are going to carry him in. Get a blanket and make it hot at the fire."

In reality Adam was convinced that his father was dead, but he knew there was no other way of repressing his mother's impetuous wailing grief than by occupying her with some active task which had hope in it.

He ran back to Seth, and the two sons lifted the sad burden in heartstricken silence. The wide-open glazed eyes were gray, like Seth's, and had once looked with mild pride on the boys before whom Thias had lived to hang his head in shame. Seth's chief feeling was awe and distress at this sudden snatching away of his father's soul; but Adam's mind rushed back over the past in a flood of relenting and pity. When death, the great Reconciler, has come, it is never our tenderness that we repent of, but our severity.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE RECTOR.

BEFORE twelve o'clock there had been some heavy storms of rain, and the water lay in deep gutters on the sides of the gravel-walks in the garden of Broxton Parsonage; the great Provence roses had been cruelly tossed by the wind and beaten by the rain, and all the delicate-stemmed border flowers had been dashed down and stained with the wet soil. A melancholy morning—because it was nearly time hay-harvest should begin, and instead of that the meadows were likely to be flooded.

But people who have pleasant homes get indoor enjoyments that they would never think of but for the rain. If it had not been a wet morning, Mr. Irwine would not have been in the dining-room playing at chess with his mother, and he loves both his mother and chess quite well enough to pass some cloudy hours very easily by their help. Let me take you into that dining-room, and show you the Rev. Adolphus Irwine, Rector of Broxton, Vicar of Hayslope, and Vicar of Blythe, a pluralist at whom the severest Church reformer would have found it difficult to look sour. We will enter very softly, and stand still in the open doorway, without awaking the glossy-brown setter who is stretched across the hearth, with her two puppies beside her; or the pug, who is dozing, with his black muzzle aloft, like a sleepy president.

The room is a large and lofty one, with an ample mullioned oriel window at one end; the walls, you see, are new, and not yet painted; but the furniture, though originally of an expensive sort, is old and scanty, and there is no drapery about the window. The crimson cloth over the large dining-table is very threadbare, though it contrasts pleasantly enough with the dead hue of the plaster on the walls; but on this cloth there is a massive silver waiter with a decanter of water on it, of the same pattern as two larger ones that are propped up on the sideboard with a coat of arms conspicuous in their centre. You suspect at once that the inhabitants of this room have inherited more blood than wealth, and would not be surprised to find that Mr. Irwine had a finely-cut nostril and upper lip;

but at present we can only see that he has a broad flat back and an abundance of powdered hair, all thrown backward and tied behind with a black ribbon—a bit of conservatism in costume which tells you that he is not a young man. He will perhaps turn round by-and-by, and in the mean time we can look at that stately old lady, his mother, a beautiful aged brunette, whose rich-toned complexion is well set off by the complex wrappings of pure white cambric and lace about her head and neck. She is as erect in her comely *embonpoint* as a statue of Ceres; and her dark face, with its delicate aquiline nose, firm proud mouth, and small intense black eye, is so keen and sarcastic in its expression that you instinctively substitute a pack of cards for the chess-men, and imagine her telling your fortune. The small brown hand with which she is lifting her queen is laden with pearls, diamonds, and turquoises; and a large black veil is very carefully adjusted over the crown of her cap, and falls in sharp contrast on the white folds about her neck. It must take a long time to dress that old lady in the morning! But it seems a law of nature that she should be dressed so: she is clearly one of those children of royalty who have never doubted their right divine, and never met with any one so absurd as to question it.

"There, Dauphin, tell me what that is!" says this magnificent old lady, as she deposits her queen very quietly and folds her arms. "I should be sorry to utter a word disagreeable to your feelings."

"Ah! you witch-mother, you sorceress! How is a Christian man to win a game off you? I should have sprinkled the board with holy water before we began. You've not won that game by fair means, now, so don't pretend it."

"Yes, yes, that's what the beaten have always said of great conquerors. But see, there's the sunshine falling on the board, to show you more clearly what a foolish move you made with that pawn. Come, shall I give you another chance?"

"No, mother, I shall leave you to your own conscience, now it's clearing up. We must go and plash up the mud a little, mustn't we, Juno?" This was addressed to the brown setter, who had jumped up at the sound of the voices and laid her nose in an insinuating way on her master's leg. "But I must go up-stairs first and see Anne. I was called away to Tholer's funeral just when I was going before."

"It's of no use, child; she can't speak to you. Kate says she has one of her worst headaches this morning."



"Oh, she likes me to go and see her just the same; she's never too ill to care about that."

If you know how much of human speech is mere purposeless impulse or habit, you will not wonder when I tell you that this identical objection had been made, and had received the same kind of answer, many hundred times in the course of the fifteen years that Mr. Irwine's sister Anne had been an invalid. Splendid old ladies, who take a long time to dress in the morning, have often slight sympathy with sickly daughters.

But while Mr. Irwine was still seated, leaning back in his chair and stroking Juno's head, the servant came to the door and said, "If you please, sir, Joshua Rann wishes to speak with you, if you are at liberty."

"Let him be shown in here," said Mrs. Irwine, taking up her knitting. "I always like to hear what Mr. Rann has got to say. His shoes will be dirty, but see that he wipes them, Carroll."

In two minutes Mr. Rann appeared at the door with very deferential bows, which, however, were far from conciliating Pug, who gave a sharp bark, and ran across the room to reconnoitre the stranger's legs; while the two puppies, regarding Mr. Rann's prominent calf and ribbed worsted stockings from a more sensuous point of view, plunged and growled over them in great enjoyment. Meantime, Mr. Irwine turned round his chair and said —

"Well, Joshua, anything the matter at Hayslope that you've come over this damp morning? Sit down, sit down. Never mind the dogs; give them a friendly kick. Here, Pug, you rascal!"

It is very pleasant to see some men turn round; pleasant as a sudden rush of warm air in winter, or the flash of firelight in the chill dusk. Mr. Irwine was one of those men. He bore the same sort of resemblance to his mother that our loving memory of a friend's face often bears to the face itself: the lines were all more generous, the smile brighter, the expression heartier. If the outline had been less finely cut, his face might have been called jolly; but that was not the right word for its mixture of bonhomie and distinction.

"Thank your reverence," answered Mr. Rann, endeavoring to look unconcerned about his legs, but shaking them alternately to keep off the puppies; "I'll stand, if you please, as more becoming. I hope I see you an' Mrs. Irwine well, an' Miss Irwine — an' Miss Anne, I hope's as well as usual."

"Yes, Joshua, thank you. You see how blooming my mother looks. She beats us younger peoplo hollow. But what's the matter?"

"Why, sir, I had to come to Brox'on to deliver some work, and I thought it bnt right to call and let you know the goins-on as there's been i' the village, such as I hanna seen i' my time, and I've lived in it man and boy sixty year come St. Thomas, and collected th' Easter dues for Mr. Blick before your reverence come into the parish, and been at the ringin' o' every bell, and the diggin' o' every grave, and sung i' the quire long afore Bartle Massey come from nobody knows where, wi' his counter-singin' and fine anthems, as puts everybody out but himself—one takin' it up after another like sheep a-bleatin' i' th' fold. I know what belongs to bein' a parish clerk, and I know as I should be wantin' i' respect to your reverence, an' church, an' king, if I was t' allow such goins-on wi'out speakin'. I was took by surprise, an' knowed nothin' on it beforehand, an' I was so flustered, I was clean as if I'd lost my tools. I hanna slep' more nor four hour this night as is past an' gone; an' then it was nothin' but nightmare, as tired me worse nor wakin'."

"Why, what in the world is the matter, Joshua? Have the thieves been at the church lead again?"

"Thieves! no, sir,—an' yet, as I may say, it *is* thieves, an' a-thievin' the church, too. It's the Methodisses as is like to get th' upper hand i' th' parish, if your reverence an' his honor, Squire Donnithorne, doesua think well to say the word an' forbid it. Not as I'm a-dictatin' to you, sir; I'm not forgettin' myself so far as to be wise above my betters. However, whether I'm wise or no, that's neither here nor there, but what I've got to say I say—as the young Methodist woman, as is at Mester Poyser's, was a-preachin' an' a-prayin' on the Green last night, as sure as I'm a-stannin' afore your reverence now."

"Preaching on the Green!" said Mr. Irwine, looking surprised but quite serene. "What, that pale pretty young woman I've seen at Poyser's? I saw she was a Methodist, or Quaker, or something of that sort, by her dress, but I didn't know she was a preacher."

"It's a true word as I say, sir," rejoined Mr. Rann, compressing his mouth into a semicircular form, and pausing long enough to indicate three notes of exclamation. "She preached on the Green last night; an' she's laid hold of Chad's Bess, as the girl's been i' fits welly iver sin'."

"Well, Bessy Cranage is a hearty-looking lass; I dare say she'll come round again, Joshua. Did anybody else go into fits?"

"No, sir, I canna say as they did. But there's no knowin' what'll come, if we're t' have such preachins as that a-goin' on ivery week — there'll be no livin' i' th' village. For them Methodisses make folks believe as if they take a mug o' drink extry, an' make theirselves a bit comfortable, they'll have to go to holl fort as sure as they're born. I'm not a tipplin' man nor a drunkard — nobody can say it on me — but I like a extry quart at Easter or Christmas time, as is nat'ral when we're goin' the rounds a-singin', an' folks offer't you for nothin'; or when I'm a-collectin' the dues; an' I like a pint wi' my pipe, an' a neighborly chat at Mester Casson's now an' then, for I was brought up i' the Churoh, thank God, an' ha' been a parish clerk this two-an'-thirty year: I should know what the church religion is."

"Well, what's your advice, Joshua? What do you think should be done?"

"Well, your reverence, I'm not for takin' any measures again' the young woman. She's well enough if she'd let alone preachin'; an' I hear as she's a-goin' away back to her own country soon. She's Mr. Poyser's own niece, an' I donna wish to say what's anyways disrespectful o' th' family at th' Hall Farm, as I've measured for shoes, little an' big, welly iver sin' I've been a shoemaker. But there's that Will Maskery, sir, as is the rampageousest Methodist as can be, an' I make no doubt it was him as stirred up th' young woman to preach last night, an' he'll be a-bringin' other folks to preach from Tredles-on, if his comb isn't cut a bit; an' I think as he should be let know as he isna t' have the makin' an' mendin' o' church carts an' implemens, let alone stayin' i' that house an' yard as is Squire Donnithorne's."

"Well, but you say yourself, Joshua, that you never knew any one come to preach on the Green before; why should you think they'll come again? The Methodists don't come to preach in little villages like Hayslope, where there's only a handful of laborers, too tired to listen to them. They might almost as well go and preach on the Binton Hills. Will Maskery is no preacher himself, I think."

"Nay, sir, he's no gift at stringin' the words together wi'out book; he'd be stuok fast like a oow i' wet clay. But he's got tongue enough to speak disrespectful about's neebors, for he said as I was a blind Pharisee; — a-usin' the Bible i' that way

to find nick-names for folks as aro his elders an' betters! — and what's worse, he's been heard to say very unbecomin' words about your reverence; for I could bring them as 'ud swear as he called you a 'dumb dog,' an' a 'idle shepherd.' You'll forgi'e me for sayin' such things over again."

"Better not, better not, Joshua. Let evil words die as soon as they're spoken. Will Maskery might be a great deal worse fellow than he is. He used to be a wild drunken rascal, neglecting his work and beating his wife, they told me; now he's thrifty and decent, and he and his wife look comfortable together. If you can bring me any proof that he interferes with his neighbors, and creates any disturbance, I shall think it my duty as a clergyman and a magistrate to interfere. But it wouldn't become wise people, like you and me, to be making a fuss about trifles, as if we thought the Church was in danger because Will Maskery lets his tongue wag rather foolishly, or a young woman talks in a serious way to a handful of people on the Green. We must 'live and let live,' Joshua, in religion as well as in other things. You go on doing your duty, as parish clerk and sexton, as well as you've always done it, and making those capital thick boots for your neighbors, and things won't go far wrong in Hayslope, depend upon it."

"Your reverence is very good to say so; an' I'm sensible as, you not livin' i' the parish, there's more upo' my shoulders."

"To be sure; and you must mind and not lower the Church in people's eyes by seeming to be frightened about it for a little thing, Joshua. I shall trust to your good sense, now, to take no notice at all of what Will Maskery says, either about you or me. You and your neighbors can go on taking your pot of beer soberly, when you've done your day's work, like good churchmen; and if Will Maskery doesn't like to join you, but to go to a prayer-meeting at Tredleston instead, let him; that's no business of yours, so long as he doesn't hinder you from doing what you like. And as to people saying a few idle words about us, we must not mind that, any more than the old church-steeple minds the rooks cawing about it. Will Maskery comes to church every Sunday afternoon, and does his wheelwright's business steadily in the week-days, and as long as he does that he must be let alone."

"Ah, sir, but when he comes to church, he sits an' shakes his head, an' looks as sour an' as ooxey when we're a-singin', as I should like to fetch him a rap across the jawl — God forgi'e me — an' Mrs. Irwine, an' your reverence, too, for speakin' so afore you. An' he said as our Christmas singin' was no better nor the cracklin' o' thorns under a pot."

"Well, he's got a bad ear for music, Joshua. When people have wooden heads, you know, it can't be helped. He won't bring the other people in Hayslope round to his opinion, while you go on singing as well as you do."

"Yes, sir, but it turns a man's stomach t' hear the Scripture misused i' that way. I know as much o' the words o' the Bible as he does, an' could say the Psalms right through i' my sleep if you was to pinch me; but I know better nor to take 'em to say my own say wi'. I might as well take the Sacrament-cup home and use it at meals."

"That's a very sensible remark of yours, Joshua; but, as I said before——"

While Mr. Irwine was speaking, the sound of a booted step, and the clink of a spur, were heard on the stone floor of the entrance-hall, and Joshua Rann moved hastily aside from the doorway to make room for some one who paused there, and said, in a ringing tenor voice,

"Godson Arthur; — may he come in?"

"Come in, come in, godson!" Mrs. Irwine answered, in the deep half-masculine tone which belongs to the vigorous old woman, and there entered a young gentleman in a riding-dress, with his right arm in a sling; whereupon followed that pleasant confusion of laughing interjections, and hand-shakings, and "How are you's?" mingled with joyous short barks and wagging of tails on the part of the canine members of the family, which tells that the visitor is on the best terms with the visited. The young gentleman was Arthur Donnithorne, known in Hayslope, variously, as "the young squire," "the heir," and "the captain." He was only a captain in the Loamshire Militia; but to the Hayslope tenants he was more intensely a captain than all the young gentlemen of the same rank in his Majesty's regulars—he outshone them as the planet Jupiter outshines the Milky Way. If you want to know more particularly how he looked, call to your remembrance some tawny-whiskered, brown-locked, clear-complexioned young Englishman whom you have met with in a foreign town, and been proud of as a fellow-countryman—well-washed, high-bred, white-handed, yet looking as if he could deliver well from the left shoulder, and floor his man; I will not be so much of a tailor as to trouble your imagination with the difference of costume, and insist on the striped waistcoat, long-tailed coat, and low top-boots.

Turning round to take a chair, Captain Donnithorne said, "But don't let me interrupt Joshua's business—he has something to say."

"Humbly begging your honor's pardon," said Joshua, bowing low, "there was one thing I had to say to his reverence as other things had drove out o' my head."

"Out with it, Joshua, quickly!" said Mr. Irwine.

"Belike, sir, you havena heared as Thias Bede's dead — drowned this morning, or more like overnight, i' the Willow Brook, again' the bridge right i' front o' the house."

"Ah!" exclaimed both the gentlemen at once, as if they were a good deal interested in the information.

"An' Seth Bede's been to me this morning to say he wished me to tell your reverence as his brother Adam begged of you particular t' allow his father's grave to be dug by the White Thorn, because his mother's set her heart on it, on account of a dream as she had; an' they'd ha' come theirselves to ask you, but they've so much to see after with the crowner, an' that; an' their mother's took on so, an' wants 'em to make sure o' the spot for fear somebody else should take it. An' if your reverence sees well and good, I'll send my boy to tell 'em as soon as I get home; an' that's why I make bold to trouble you wi' it, his honor being present."

"To be sure, Joshua, to be sure, they shall have it. I'll ride round to Adam myself, and see him. Send your boy, however, to say they shall have the grave, lest anything should happen to detain me. And now, good-morning, Joshua; go into the kitchen and have some ale."

"Poor old Thias!" said Mr. Irwine, when Joshua was gone. "I'm afraid the drink helped the brook to drown him. I should have been glad for the load to have been taken off my friend Adam's shoulders in a less painful way. That fine fellow has been propping up his father from ruin for the last five or six years."

"He's a regular trump, is Adam," said Captain Donnithorne. "When I was a little fellow, and Adam was a strapping lad of fifteen, and taught me carpentering, I used to think if ever I was a rich sultan, I would make Adam my grand-vizier. And I believe now, he would bear the exaltation as well as any poor wise man in an Eastern story. If ever I live to be a large-acred man instead of a poor devil with a mortgaged allowance of pocket-money, I'll have Adam for my right-hand. He shall manage my woods for me, for he seems to have a better notion of those things than any man I ever met with; and I know he would make twice the money of them that my grandfather does, with that miserable old Satchell to manage, who understands no more about timber than an old carp. I've

mentioned the subject to my grandfather once or twice, but for some reason or other he has a dislike to Adam, and I can do nothing. But come, your reverence, are you for a ride with me? It's splendid out of doors now. We can go to Adam's together, if you like; but I want to call at the Hall Farm on my way, to look at the whelps Poyser is keeping for me."

"You must stay and have lunch first, Arthur," said Mrs. Irwine. "It's nearly two. Carroll will bring it in directly."

"I want to go to the Hall Farm too," said Mr. Irwine, "to have another look at the little Methodist who is staying there. Joshua tells me she was preaching on the Green last night."

"Oh, by Jove!" said Captain Donnithorne, laughing. "Why, she looks as quiet as a mouse. There's something rather striking about her, though. I positively felt quite bashful the first time I saw her: she was sitting stooping over her sewing in the sunshine outside the house, when I rode up and called out, without noticing that she was a stranger, 'Is Martin Poyser at home?' I declare, when she got up and looked at me, and just said, 'He's in the house, I believe: I'll go and call him,' I felt quite ashamed of having spoken so abruptly to her. She looked like St. Catherine in a Quaker dress. It's a type of face one rarely sees among our common people."

"I should like to see the young woman, Dauphin," said Mrs. Irwine. "Make her come here on some pretext or other."

"I don't know how I can manage that, mother; it will hardly do for me to patronize a Methodist preacher, even if she would consent to be patronized by an idle shepherd, as Will Maskery calls me. You should have come in a little sooner, Arthur, to hear Joshua's denunciation of his neighbor Will Maskery. The old fellow wants me to excommunicate the wheelwright, and then deliver him over to the civil arm—that is to say, to your grandfather—to be turned out of house and yard. If I chose to interfere in this business, now, I might get up as pretty a story of hatred and persecution as the Methodists need desire to publish in the next number of their magazine. It wouldn't take me much trouble to persuade Chad Cranage and half-a-dozen other bull-headed fellows, that they would be doing an acceptable service to the Church by hunting Will Maskery out of the village with rope-ends and pitchforks; and then, when I had furnished them with half a sovereign to get gloriously drunk after their exertions, I should have put the climax to as pretty a farce

as any of my brother clergy have set going in their parishes for the last thirty years."

"It is really insolent of the man, though, to call you an 'idle shepherd,' and a 'dumb dog,'" said Mrs. Irwine: "I should be inclined to check him a little there. You are too easy-tempered, Danphin."

"Why, mother, you don't think it would be a good way of sustaining my dignity to set about vindicating myself from the aspersions of Will Maskery? Besides, I'm not so sure that they *are* aspersions. I *am* a lazy fellow, and get terribly heavy in my saddle; not to mention that I'm always spending more than I can afford in bricks and mortar, so that I get savage at a lame beggar when he asks me for sixpence. Those poor lean cobblers, who think they can help to regenerate mankind by setting out to preach in the morning twilight before they begin their day's work, may well have a poor opinion of me. But come, let us have our luncheon. Isn't Kate coming to lunch?"

"Miss Irwine told Bridget to take her lunch up-stairs," said Carroll; "she can't leave Miss Anne."

"Oh, very well. Tell Bridget to say I'll go up and see Miss Anne presently. You can use your right arm quite well, now, Arthur," Mr. Irwine continued, observing that Captain Donnithorne had taken his arm out of the sling.

"Yes, pretty well; but Godwin insists on my keeping it up constantly for some time to come. I hope I shall be able to get away to the regiment, though, in the beginning of August. It's a desperately dull business being shut up at the Chase in the summer months, when one can neither hunt nor shoot, so as to make one's self pleasantly sleepy in the evening. However, we are to astonish the echoes on the 30th of July. My grandfather has given me *carte blanche* for once, and I promise you the entertainment shall be worthy of the occasion. The world will not see the grand epoch of my majority twice. I think I shall have a lofty throne for you, goddamina, or rather two, one on the lawn and another in the ball-room, that you may sit and look down upon us like an Olympian goddess."

"I mean to bring out my best brocade, that I wore at your christening twenty years ago," said Mrs. Irwine. "Ah, I think I shall see your poor mother flitting about in her white dress, which looked to me almost like a shroud that very day; and it *was* her shroud only three months after; and your little cap and christening dress were buried with her too.



She had set her heart on that, sweet soul! Thank God you take after your mother's family, Arthur. If you had been a puny, wiry, yellow baby, I wouldn't have stood godmother to you. I should have been sure you would turn out a Donni-thorne. But you were such a broad-faced, broad-chested, loud-screaming rascal, I knew you were every inch of you a Tradgett."

"But you might have been a little too hasty there, mother," said Mr. Irwine, smiling. "Don't you remember how it was with Juno's last pups? One of them was the very image of its mother, but it had two or three of its father's tricks notwithstanding. Nature is clever enough to cheat even you, mother."

"Nonsense, child! Nature never makes a ferret in the shape of a mastiff. You'll never persuade me that I can't tell what men are by their outsides. If I don't like a man's looks, depend upon it I shall never like *him*. I don't want to know people that look ugly and disagreeable, any more than I want to taste dishes that look disagreeable. If they make me shudder at the first glance, I say, take them away. An ugly, piggish, or fishy eye, now, makes me feel quite ill; it's like a bad smell."

"Talking of eyes," said Captain Donnithorne, "that reminds me that I've got a book I meant to bring you, god-mamma. It came down in a parcel from Loudon the other day. I know you are fond of queer, wizard-like stories. It's a volume of poems, 'Lyrical Ballads:' most of them seem to be twaddling stuff; but the first is in a different style — 'The Ancient Mariner' is the title. I can hardly make head or tail of it as a story, but it's a strange, striking thing. I'll send it over to you; and there are some other books that *you* may like to see, Irwine — pamphlets about Antinomianism and Evangelicalism, whatever they may be. I can't think what the fellow means by sending such things to me. I've written to him, to desire that from henceforth he will send me no book or pamphlet on anything that ends in *ism*."

"Well, I don't know that I'm very fond of *isms* myself; but I may as well look at the pamphlets; they let one see what is going on. I've a little matter to attend to, Arthur," continued Mr. Irwine, rising to leave the room, "and then I shall be ready to set out with you."

The little matter that Mr. Irwine had to attend to took him up the old stone staircase (part of the house was very old), and made him pause before a door at which he knocked

gently. "Come in," said a woman's voice, and he entered a room so darkened by blinds and curtains that Miss Kate, the thin middle-aged lady standing by the bedside, would not have had light enough for any other sort of work than the knitting which lay on the little table near her. But at present she was doing what required only the dimmest light — sponging the aching head that lay on the pillow with fresh vinegar. It was a small face, that of the poor sufferer; perhaps it had once been pretty, but now it was worn and sallow. Miss Kate came towards her brother and whispered, "Don't speak to her; she can't bear to be spoken to to-day." Anne's eyes were closed, and her brow contracted as if from intense pain. Mr. Irwine went to the bedside, and took up one of the delicate hands and kissed it; a slight pressure from the small fingers told him that it was worth while to have come up-stairs for the sake of doing that. He lingered a moment, looking at her, and then turned away and left the room, treading very gently — he had taken off his boots and put on slippers before he came up-stairs. Whoever remembers how many things he has declined to do even for himself, rather than have the trouble of putting on or taking off his boots, will not think this last detail insignificant.

And Mr. Irwine's sisters, as any person of family within ten miles of Broxton could have testified, were such stupid, uninteresting women! It was quite a pity handsome, clever Mrs. Irwine should have had such commonplace daughters. That fine old lady herself was worth driving ten miles to see, any day; her beauty, her well-preserved faculties, and her old-fashioned dignity, made her a graceful subject for conversation in turn with the King's health, the sweet new patterns in cotton dresses, the news from Egypt, and Lord Dacey's lawsuit, which was fretting poor Lady Dacey to death. But no one ever thought of mentioning the Miss Irwines, except the poor people in Broxton village, who regarded them as deep in the science of medicine, and spoke of them vaguely as "the gentle-folks." If any one had asked old Job Dummilow who gave him his flannel jacket, he would have answered, "the gentle-folks, last winter;" and widow Steeno dwelt much on the virtues of the "stuff" the gentlefolks gave her for her cough. Under this name, too, they were used with great effect as a means of taming refractory children, so that at the sight of poor Miss Anne's sallow face, several small urchins had a terrified sense that she was cognizant of all their worst misdemeanors, and knew the precise number of stones with which they had

intended to hit farmer Britton's ducks. But for all who saw them through a less mythical medium, the Miss Irwines were quite superfluous existences; inartistic figures crowding the canvas of life without adequate effect. Miss Anne, indeed, if her chronic headaches could have been accounted for by a pathetic story of disappointed love, might have had some romantic interest attached to her; but no such story had either been known or invented concerning her, and the general impression was quite in accordance with the fact, that both the sisters were old maids for the prosaic reason that they had never received an eligible offer.

Nevertheless, to speak paradoxically, the existence of insignificant people has very important consequences in the world. It can be shown to affect the price of bread and the rate of wages, to call forth many evil tempers from the selfish, and many heroisms from the sympathetic, and, in other ways, to play no small part in the tragedy of life. And if that handsome, generous-blooded clergyman, the Rev. Adolphus Irwine, had not had these two hopelessly-maiden sisters, his lot would have been shaped quite differently: he would very likely have taken a comely wife in his youth, and now, when his hair was getting gray under the powder, would have had tall sons and blooming daughters — such possessions, in short, as men commonly think will repay them for all the labor they take under the sun. As it was — having with all his three livings no more than seven hundred a-year, and seeing no way of keeping his splendid mother and his sickly sister, not to reckon a second sister, who was usually spoken of without any adjective, in such lady-like ease as became their birth and habits, and at the same time providing for a family of his own — he remained, you see, at the age of eight-and-forty, a bachelor, not making any merit of that renunciation, but saying laughingly, if any one alluded to it, that he made it an excuse for many indulgences which a wife would never have allowed him. And perhaps he was the only person in the world who did not think his sisters uninteresting and superfluous; for his was one of those large-hearted, sweet-blooded natures that never know a narrow or a grudging thought; epicurean, if you will, with no enthusiasm, no self-scourging sense of duty; but yet, as you have seen, of a sufficiently subtle moral fibre to have an unwearying tenderness for obscure and monotonous suffering. It was his large-hearted indulgence that made him ignore his mother's hardness towards her daughters, which was the more striking from its contrast with her doting fondness towards

himself: he held it no virtue to frown at irremediable faults.

See the difference between the impression a man makes on you when you walk by his side in familiar talk, or look at him in his home, and the figure he makes when seen from a lofty historical level, or even in the eyes of a critical neighbor who thinks of him as an embodied system or opinion rather than as a man. Mr. Roe, the "travelling preacher" stationed at Treddleston, had included Mr. Irwine in a general statement concerning the Church clergy in the surrounding district, whom he described as men given up to the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life; hunting and shooting, and adorning their own houses; asking what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed? — careless of dispensing the bread of life to their flocks, preaching at best but a carnal and soul-benumbing morality, and trafficking in the souls of men by receiving money for discharging the pastoral office in parishes where they did not so much as look on the faces of the people more than once a-year. The ecclesiastical historian, too, looking into parliamentary reports of that period, finds honorable members zealous for the Church, and untainted with any sympathy for the "tribe of canting Methodists," making statements scarcely less melancholy than that of Mr. Roe. And it is impossible for me to say that Mr. Irwine was altogether belied by the generic classification assigned him. He really had no very lofty aims, no theological enthusiasm: if I were closely questioned, I should be obliged to confess that he felt no serious alarms about the souls of his parishioners, and would have thought it a mere loss of time to talk in a doctrinal and awakening manner to old "Feyther Taft," or even to Chad Cranage the blacksmith. If he had been in the habit of speaking theoretically, he would perhaps have said that the only healthy form religion could take in such minds was that of certain dim but strong emotions, suffusing themselves as a hallowing influence over the family affections and neighborly duties. He thought the custom of baptism more important than its doctrine, and that the religious benefits the peasant drew from the church where his fathers worshipped and the sacred piece of turf where they lay buried, were but slightly dependent on a clear understanding of the Liturgy or the sermon. Clearly the Rector was not what is called in these days an "earnest" man: he was fonder of church history than of divinity, and had much more insight into men's characters than interest in their opinions; he was

neither laborious, nor obviously self-denying, nor very copious in almsgiving, and his theology, you perceive, was lax. His mental palate, indeed, was rather pagan, and found a savoriness in a quotation from Sophocles or Theocritus that was quite absent from any text in Isaiah or Amos. But if you feed your young setter on raw flesh, how can you wonder at its retaining a relish for uncooked partridge in after-life? and Mr. Irwine's recollections of young enthusiasm and ambition were all associated with poetry and ethics that lay aloof from the Bible.

On the other hand, I must plead, for I have an affectionate partiality towards the Rector's memory, that he was not vindictive — and some philanthropists have been so; that he was not intolerant — and there is a rumor that some zealous theologians have not been altogether free from that blemish; that although he would probably have declined to give his body to be burned in any public cause, and was far from bestowing all his goods to feed the poor, he had that clarity which has sometimes been lacking to very illustrious virtue — he was tender to other men's failings, and unwilling to impute evil. He was one of those men, and they are not the commonest, of whom we can know the best only by following them away from the market-place, the platform, and the pulpit, entering with them into their own homes, hearing the voice with which they speak to the young and aged about their own hearth-stone, and witnessing their thoughtful care for the every-day wants of every-day companions, who take all their kindness as a matter of course, and not as a subject for panegyric.

Such men, happily, have lived in times when great abuses flourished, and have sometimes even been the living representatives of the abuses. That is a thought which might comfort us a little under the opposite fact — that it is better sometimes *not* to follow great reformers of abuses beyond the threshold of their homes.

But whatever you may think of Mr. Irwine now, if you had met him that June afternoon riding on his gray cob, with his dogs running beside him — portly, upright, manly, with a good-natured smile on his finely-turned lips as he talked to his dashing young companion on the bay mare, you must have felt that, however ill he harmonized with sound theories of the clerical office, he somehow harmonized extremely well with that peaceful landscape.

See them in the bright sunlight, interrupted every now and then by rolling masses of cloud, ascending the slope from the Broxton side, where the tall gables and elms of the rectory

predominate over the tiny white-washed church. They will soon be in the parish of Ifayslope; the gray church-tower and village roofs lie before them to the left, and farther on, to the right, they can just see the chimneys of the Hall Farm.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## THE HALL FARM.

EVIDENTLY that gate is never opened: for the long grass and the great hemlocks grow close against it; and if it were opened, it is so rusty, that the force necessary to turn it on its hinges would be likely to pull down the square stone-built pillars, to the detriment of the two stone lionesses which grin with a doubtful carnivorous affability above a eont of arms surmounting each of the pillars. It would be easy enough, by the aid of the nicks in the stone pillars, to climb over the brick wall with its smooth stone coping; but by putting our eyes close to the rusty bars of the gate, we can see the house well enough, and all but the very corners of the grassy enclosure.

It is a very fine old place, of red brick, softened by a pale powdery lichen, which has dispersed itself with happy irregularity, so as to bring the red brick into terms of friendly companionship with the limestone ornaments surrounding the three gables, the windows, and the door-place. But the windows are patched with wooden panes, and the door, I think, is like the gate — it is never opened: how it would groan and grate against the stone floor if it were! For it is a solid, heavy, handsome door, and must once have been in the habit of shutting with a sonorous bang behind a liveried lackey, who had just seen his master and mistress off the grounds in a carriage and pair.

But at present one might fancy the house in the early stage of a chancery suit, and that the fruit from that grand double row of walnut-trees on the right hand of the enclosure would fall and rot among the grass, if it were not that we heard the booming bark of dogs echoing from great buildings at the back. And now the half-weaned calves that have been sheltering themselves in a gorse-built hovel against the left-hand

wall, come out and set up a silly answer to that terrible bark, doubtless supposing that it has reference to buckets of milk.

Yes, the house must be inhabited, and we will see by whom; for imagination is a licensed trespasser: it has no fear of dogs, but may climb over walls and peep in at windows with impunity. Put your face to one of the glass panes in the right-hand window: what do you see? A large open fireplace, with rusty dogs in it, and a bare boarded-floor; at the far end, fleeces of wool stacked up; in the middle of the floor, some empty corn-bags. That is the furniture of the dining-room. And what through the left-hand window? Several clothes-horses, a pillion, a spinning-wheel, and an old box wide open, and stuffed full of colored rags. At the edge of this box there lies a great wooden doll, which, so far as mutilation is concerned, bears a strong resemblance to the finest Greek sculpture, and especially in the total loss of its nose. Near it there is a little chair, and the butt-end of a boy's leather long-lashed whip.

The history of the house is plain now. It was once the residence of a country squire, whose family, probably dwindling down to mere spinsterhood, got merged in the more territorial name of Donnithorne. It was once the Hall; it is now the Hall Farm. Like the life in some coast-town that was once a watering-place, and is now a port, where the genteel streets are silent and grass-grown, and the docks and warehouses busy and resonant, the life at the Hall has changed its focus, and no longer radiates from the parlor, but from the kitchen and the farm-yard.

Plenty of life there! though this is the drowsiest time of the year, just before hay-harvest; and it is the drowsiest time of the day too, for it is close upon three by the sun, and it is half-past three by Mrs. Poyser's handsome eight-day clock. But there is always a stronger sense of life when the sun is brilliant after rain; and now he is pouring down his beams, and making sparkles among the wet straw, and lighting up every patch of vivid green moss on the red tiles of the cow-shed, and turning even the muddy water that is hurrying along the channel to the drain into a mirror for the yellow-billed ducks, who are seizing the opportunity of getting a drink with as much body in it as possible. There is quite a concert of noises; the great bull-dog, chained against the stables, is thrown into furious exasperation by the unwary approach of a cock too near the mouth of his kennel, and sends forth a thundering bark, which is answered by two fox-hounds shut

up in the opposite cow-house; the old top-knotted hens, scratching with their chicks among the straw, set up a sympathetic croaking as the discomfited cock joins them; a sow with her brood, all very muddy as to the legs, and curled as to the tail, throws in some deep staccato notes; our friends the calves are bleating from the home cleft; and, under all, a fine ear discerns the continuous hum of human voices.

For the great barn-doors are thrown wide open, and men are busy there mending the harness, under the superintendence of Mr. Goby the "whittaw," otherwise saddler, who entertains them with the latest Treddleston gossip. It is certainly rather an unfortunate day that Alick, the shepherd, has chosen for having the whittaws, since the morning turned out so wet; and Mrs. Poyser has spoken her mind pretty strongly as to the dirt which the extra number of men's shoes brought into the house at dinner-time. Indeed, she has not yet recovered her equanimity on the subject, though it is now nearly three hours since dinner, and the house-floor is perfectly clean again; as clean as everything else in that wonderful house-place, where the only chance of collecting a few grains of dust would be to climb on the salt-coffer, and put your finger on the high mantel-shelf on which the glittering brass candlesticks are enjoying their summer sinecure; for at this time of year, of course, every one goes to bed while it is yet light, or at least light enough to discern the outline of objects after you have bruised your shins against them. Surely nowhere else could an oak clock-case and an oak table have got to such a polish by the hand: genuine "elbow polish," as Mrs. Poyser called it, for she thanked God she never had any of your varnished rubbish in her house. Hetty Sorrel often took the opportunity, when her aunt's back was turned, of looking at the pleasing reflection of herself in those polished surfaces, for the oak table was usually turned up like a screen, and was more for ornament than for use; and she could see herself sometimes in the great round pewter dishes that were ranged on the shelves above the long deal dinner-table, or in the hobs of the grate, which always shone like jasper.

Everything was looking at its brightest at this moment, for the sun shone right on the pewter dishes, and from their reflecting surfaces pleasant jets of light were thrown on mellow oak and bright brass;—and on a still pleasanter object than these; for some of the rays fell on Dinah's finely-moulded cheek, and lit up her pale red hair to auburn, as she bent over the heavy household linen which she was mending for her



aunt. No scene could have been more peaceful, if Mrs. Poyser, who was ironing a few things that still remained from the Monday's wash, had not been making a frequent clinking with her iron, and moving to and fro whenever she wanted it to cool; carrying the keen glance of her blue-gray eye from the kitchen to the dairy, where Hetty was making up the butter, and from the dairy to the back-kitchen, where Nancy was taking the pies out of the oven. Do not suppose, however, that Mrs. Poyser was elderly or shrewish in her appearance; she was a good-looking woman, not more than eight-and-thirty, of fair complexion and sandy hair, well-shapen, light-footed: the most conspicuous article in her attire was an ample checkered linen apron, which almost covered her skirt; and nothing could be plainer or less noticeable than her cap and gown, for there was no weakness of which she was less tolerant than feminine vanity, and the preference of ornament to utility. The family likeness between her and her niece Dinah Morris, with the contrast between her keenness and Dinah's seraphic gentleness of expression, might have served a painter as an excellent suggestion for a Martha and Mary. Their eyes were just of the same color, but a striking test of the difference in their operation was seen in the demeanor of Trip, the black-and-tan terrier, whenever that much-suspected dog unwarily exposed himself to the freezing arctic ray of Mrs. Poyser's glance. Her tongue was not less keen than her eye, and, whenever a damsel came within earshot, seemed to take up an unfinished lecture, as a barrel-organ takes up a tune, precisely at the point where it had left off.

The fact that it was churning-day was another reason why it was inconvenient to have the whittaws, and why, consequently, Mrs. Poyser should scold Molly the housemaid with unusual severity. To all appearance Molly had got through her after-dinner work in an exemplary manner, had "cleaned herself" with great despatch, and now came to ask, submissively, if she should sit down to her spinning till milking-time. But this blameless conduct, according to Mrs. Poyser, shrouded a secret indulgence of unbecoming wishes, which she now dragged forth and held up to Molly's view with cutting eloquence.

"Spinning, indeed! It isn't spinning as you'd be at, I'll be bound, and let you have your own way. I never knew your equals for gallowsness. To think of a gell o' your age wanting to go and sit with half-a-dozen men! I'd ha' been ashamed to let the words pass over my lips if I'd been you.

And you, as havo been here ever since last Michaelmas, and I hired you at Treddles'on stattsits, without a bit o' charactor—as I say, you might be grateful to be hired in that way to a respectable place; and you knew no more o' what belongs to work when you come here than the mawkin i' the field. As poor a two-fisted thing as ever I saw, you know you was. Who taught you to scrub a floor, I should like to know? Why, you'd leave the dirt in heaps i' the corners—anybody 'ud think you'd never been brought up among Christians. And as for spinning, why, you've wasted as much as your wage i' the flax you've spoiled learning to spin. And you've a right to feel that, and not to go about as gaping and as thoughtless as if you was beholding to nobody. Comb the wool for the whittaws, indeed! That's what you'd like to be doing, is it? That's the way with you—that's the road you'd all like to go, headlongs to ruin. You're never easy till you've got some sweetheart as is as big a fool as yourself: you think you'll be finely off when you're married, I dare say, and have got a three-legged stool to sit on, and never a blanket to cover you, and a bit o' oat-cake for your dinner, as three children are a-snatching at."

"I'm sure I donna want t' go wi' the whittaws," said Molly, whimpering, and quite overcome by this Dantean picture of her future, "on'y we allays used to comb the wool for'n at Mester Ottley's; an' so I just axed ye. I donna want to set eyes on the whittaws again; I wish I may never stir if I do."

"Mr. Ottley's, indeed! It's fine talking o' what you did at Mr. Ottley's. Your missis there might like her floors dirted wi' whittaws for what I know. There's no knowing what people *wonna* like—such ways as I've heard of! I never had a gell come into my houso as seemed to know what cleaning was; I think people live like pigs, for my part. And as to that Betty as was dairymaid at Trent's before she come to me, she'd ha' left the cheeses without turning from week's end to week's end, and the dairy thralls, I might ha' wrote my name on 'em, when I come down-stairs after my illness, as the doctor said it was inflammation—it was a mercy I got well of it. And to think o' your knowing no better, Molly, and been here a-going i' nine months, and not for want o' talking to, neither—and what are you standing there for, like a jack as is run down, instead o' getting your wheel out? You're a rare un for sitting down to your work a little while after it's time to pnt by."

"Munny, my iron's twite told; pease put it down to warm."

The small chirruping voice that uttered this request came from a little sunny-haired girl between three and four, who, seated on a high chair at the end of the ironing-table, was ardently clutching the handle of a miniature iron with her tiny fat fist, and ironing rags with an assiduity that required her to put her little red tongue out as far as anatomy would allow.

"Cold, is it, my darling? Bless your sweet face!" said Mrs. Poyser, who was remarkable for the facility with which she could relapse from her official oburgatory to one of fondness or of friendly converse. "Never mind! Mother's done her ironing now. She's going to put the ironing things away."

"Munny, I tould 'ike to do into de barn to Tommy, to see de whittawd."

"No, no, no; Totty 'ud get her feet wet," said Mrs. Poyser, carrying away her iron. "Run into the dairy and see cousin Hetty make the butter."

"I tould 'ike a bit o' pum-take," rejoined Totty, who seemed to be provided with several relays of requests; at the same time, taking the opportunity of her momentary leisure to put her fingers into a bowl of starch, and drag it down, so as to empty the contents with tolerable completeness on to the ironing-sheet.

"Did ever anybody see the like?" screamed Mrs. Poyser, running towards the table when her eye had fallen on the blue stream. "The ohild's allays i' mischief if your back's turned a minute. What shall I do to you, you naughty, naughty gell?"

Totty, however, had descended from her chair with great swiftness, and was already in retreat towards the dairy with a sort of waddling run, and an amount of fat on the nape of her neck, which made her look like the metamorphosis of a white sucking-pig.

The starch having been wiped up by Molly's help, and the ironing apparatus put by, Mrs. Poyser took up her knitting, which always lay ready at hand, and was the work she liked best, because she could carry it on automatically as she walked to and fro. But now she came and sat down opposite Dinah, whom she looked at in a meditative way, as she knitted her gray worsted stocking.

"Yon look th' image o' your aunt Judith, Dinah, when you sit a-sewing. I could almost fancy it was thirty years 'back, and I was a little gell at home, looking at Judith as she sat at

her work, after she'd done the house up; only it was a little cottage, father's was, and not a big runbling house as gets dirty i' one corner as fast as you clean it in another; but for all that, I could fancy you was your aunt Judith, only her hair was a deal darker than yours, and she was stouter and broader i' the shoulders. Judith and me allays hung together, though she had such queer ways, but your mother and her never could agree. Oh! your mother little thought as she'd have a daughter just cut out after the very pattern o' Judith, and leave her an orphan, too, for Judith to take care on, and bring up with a spoon when *she* was in the graveyard at Stoniton. I allays said that o' Judith, as she'd bear a pound weight any day, to save anybody else carrying a ounce. And she was just the same from the first o' my remembering her; it made no difference in her, as I could see, when she took to the Methodists, only she talked a bit different, and wore a different sort o' cap; but she'd never in her life spent a penny on herself more than keeping herself decent."

"She was a blessed woman," said Dinah; "God had given her a loving, self-forgetting nature, and he perfected it by grace. And she was very fond of you too, aunt Rachel. I've often heard her talk of you in the same sort of way. When she had that bad illness, and I was only eleven years old, she used to say, 'You'll have a friend on earth in your aunt Rachel, if I'm taken from you; for she has a kind heart;' and I'm sure I've found it so."

"I don't know how, child; anybody 'ud be cunning to do anything for you, I think; you're like the birds o' th' air, and live nobody knows how. I'd ha' been glad to behave to you like a mother's sister, if you'd come and live i' this country, where there's some shelter and victual for man and beast, and folks don't live on the naked hills, like poultry a-scratching on a gravel bank. And then you might get married to some decent man, and there'd be plenty ready to have you, if you'd only leave off that preaching, as is ten times worse than anything your aunt Judith ever did. And even if you'd marry Seth Bede, as is a poor wool-gathering Methodist, and's never like to have a penny beforehand, I know your uncle 'ud help you with a pig, and very like a cow, for he's allays been good-natur'd to my kin, for all they're poor, and made 'em welcome to the house; and 'ud do for you, I'll be bound, as much as ever he'd do for Hetty, though she's his own niece. And there's linen in the house as I could well spare you, for I've got lots o' sheeting and table-clothing, and towelling, as isn't

made up. 'There's a piece o' sheeting I could give you as that squinting Kitty spun — she was a rare girl to spin, for all she squinted, and the children couldn't abide her; and, you know, the spinning's going on constant, and there's new linen wove twice as fast as the old wears out. But where's the use o' talking, if ye wouna be persuaded, and settle down like any other woman in her senses, instead o' wearing yourself out with walking and preaching, and giving away every penny you get, so as you've nothing saved against sickness; and all the things you've got i' the world, I verily believe, 'ud go into a bundle no bigger nor a double cheese. And all because you've got notions i' your head about religion more nor what's i' the Catechism and the Prayer-book."

"But not more than what's in the Bible, aunty," said Dinah.

"Yes, and the Bible too, for that matter," Mrs. Poyser rejoined, rather sharply; "else why shouldn't them as know best what's in the Bible — the parsons and people as have got nothing to do but learn it — do the same as you do? But, for the matter o' that, if everybody was to do like you, the world must come to a standstill; for if everybody tried to do without house and home, and with poor eating and drinking, and was allays talking as we must despise the things o' the world, as you say, I should like to know where the pick o' the stock, and the corn, and the best new-milk cheeses 'ud have to go. Everybody 'ud be wanting bread made o' tail ends, and everybody 'ud be running after everybody else to preach to 'em, instead o' bringing up their families, and laying by against a bad harvest. It stands to sense as that can't be the right religion."

"Nay, dear aunty, you never heard me say that all people are called to forsake their work and their families. It's quite right the land should be ploughed and sowed, and the precious corn stored, and the things of this life cared for, and right that people should rejoice in their families, and provide for them, so that this is done in the fear of the Lord, and that they are not unmindful of the soul's wants while they are caring for the body. We can all be servants of God wherever our lot is cast, but Ho gives us different sorts of work, according as He fits us for it and calls us to it. I can no more help spending my life in trying to do what I can for the souls of others, than you could help running if you heard little Totty crying at the other end of the house; the voice would go to your heart, you would think the dear child was in trouble or in danger, and you couldn't rest without running to help her and comfort her."

"Ah," said Mrs. Poyser, rising and walking towards the door, "I know it 'ud be just the same if I was to talk to you for hours. You'd make me the same answer, at th' end. I might as well talk to the running brook, and tell it to stan' still."

The causeway outside the kitchen door was dry enough now for Mrs. Poyser to stand there quite pleasantly and see what was going on in the yard, the gray worsted stocking making a steady progress in her hands all the while. But she had not been standing there more than five minutes before she came in again, and said to Dinah, in rather a flurried, awe-stricken tone —

"If there isn't Captain Donnithorne and Mr. Irwine a-coming into the yard I'll lay my life they're come to speak about your preaching on the Green, Dinah; it's you must answer 'em, for I'm dumb. I've said enough a'ready about your bringing such disgrace upo' your uncle's family. I wouldn't ha' minded if you'd been Mr. Poyser's own niece — folks must put up wi' their own kin, as they put up wi' their own noses — it's their own flesh and blood. Bnt to think of a niece o' mine being cause o' my husband's being turned out of his farm, and me brought him no fortin but my savins —"

"Nay, dear aunt Rachel," said Dinah gently, "you've no cause for such fears. I've strong assurance that no evil will happen to you and my uncle and the children from anything I've done. I didn't preach without direction."

"Direction! I know very well what you mean by direction," said Mrs. Poyser, knitting in a rapid and agitated manner. "When there's a bigger maggot than usual in your head you call it 'direction;' and then nothing can stir you — you look like the statty o' the outside o' Treddles'on church, a-starin' and a-smilin' whether it's fair weather or foul. I hanna common patience with you."

By this time the two gentlemen had reached the paliugs, and had got down from their horses: it was plain they meant to come in. Mrs. Poyser advanced to the door to meet them, courtesying low, and trembling between anger with Dinah and anxiety to conduct herself with perfect propriety on the occasion. For in those days the keenest of bucolic minds felt a whispering awe at the sight of the gentry, such as of old men felt when they stood on tip-toe to watch the gods passing by in tall human shape.

"Well, Mrs. Poyser, how are you after this stormy morning?" said Mr. Irwine, with his stately cordiality. "Our feet are quite dry; we shall not soil your beautiful floor."

"Oh, sir, don't mention it," said Mrs. Poyser. "Will you and the Captain please to walk into the parlor?"

"No, indeed, thank you, Mrs. Poyser," said the Captain, looking eagerly round the kitchen, as if his eye were seeking something it could not find. "I delight in your kitchen. I think it is the most charming room I know. I should like every farmer's wife to come and look at it for a pattern."

"Oh, you're pleased to say so, sir. Pray take a seat," said Mrs. Poyser, relieved a little by this compliment and the Captain's evident good-humor, but still glancing anxiously at Mr. Irwine, who, she saw, was looking at Dinah and advancing towards her.

"Poyser is not at home, is he?" said Captain Donnithorne, seating himself where he could see along the short passage to the open dairy-door.

"No, sir, he isn't; he's gone to Rosseter to see Mr. West, the factor, about the wool. But there's father i' the barn, sir, if he'd be of any use."

"No, thank you; I'll just look at the whelps and leave a message about them with your shepherd. I must come another day and see your husband; I want to have a consultation with him about horses. Do you know when he's likely to be at liberty?"

"Why, sir, you can hardly miss him, except it's o' Tredles'on market-day—that's of a Friday, you know. For if he's anywhere on the farm we can send for him in a minute. If we'd got rid o' the Scantlands we should have no outlying fields; and I should be glad of it, for if ever anything happens he's sure to be gone to the Scantlands. Things allays happen so contrairy, if they've a chance; and it's an unnat'ral thing to have one bit o' your farm in one county and all the rest in another."

"Ah, the Scantlands would go much better with Choyce's farm, especially as he wants dairy-land and you've got plenty. I think yours is the prettiest farm on the estate, though; and do you know, Mrs. Poyser, if I were going to marry and settle, I should be tempted to turn you out, and do up this fine old house, and turn farmer myself."

"Oh, sir," said Mrs. Poyser rather alarmed, "you wouldn't like it at all. As for farming, it's putting money into your pocket wi' your right hand and fetching it out wi' your left. As fur as I can see, it's raising victual for other folks, and just getting a mouthful for yourself and your children as you go along. Not as you'd be like a poor man as wants to get his

bread; you could afford to lose as much money as you liked i' farming; but it's poor fun losing money, I should think, though I understan' it's what the great folks i' London play at more than anything. For my husband heard at market as Lord Dacey's eldest son had lost thousands upo' thousands to the Prince o' Wales, and they said my lady was going to pawn her jewels to pay for him. But you know more about that than I do, sir. But, as for farming, sir, I canna think as you'd like it; and this house—the draughts in it are enough to cut you through, and it's my opinion the floors up-stairs are very rotten, and the rats i' the cellar are beyond anything."

"Why, that's a terrible picture, Mrs. Poyser. I think I should be doing you a service to turn you out of such a place. But there's no chance of that. I'm not likely to settle for the next twenty years, till I'm a stout gentleman of forty; and my grandfather would never consent to part with such good tenants as you."

"Well, sir, if he thinks so well o' Mr. Poyser for a tenant, I wish you could put in a word for him to allow us some new gates for the Five closes, for my husband's been asking and asking till he's tired, and to think o' what he's done for the farm, and's never had a penny allowed him, be the times bad or good. And as I've said to my husband often and often, I'm sure if the Captain had anything to do with it, it wouldn't be so. Not as I wish to speak disrespectful o' them as have got the power i' their hands, but it's more than flesh and blood 'ull bear sometimes, to be toiling and striving, and up early and down late, and hardly sleeping a wink when you lie down for thinking as the cheese may swell, or the cows may slip their calf, or the wheat may grow green again i' the sheaf—and after all, at th' end o' the year, it's like as if you'd been cooking a feast and had got the smell of it for your pains."

Mrs. Poyser, once launched into conversation, always sailed along without any check from her preliminary awe of the gentry. The confidence she felt in her own powers of exposition was a motive force that overcame all resistance.

"I'm afraid I should only do harm instead of good, if I were to speak about the gates, Mrs. Poyser," said the Captain, "though I assure you there's no man on the estate I would sooner say a word for than your husband. I know his farm is in better order than any other within ten miles of us; and as for the kitchen," he added, smiling, "I don't believe there's one in the kingdom to beat it. By the by, I've never seen your dairy: I must see your dairy, Mrs. Poyser."



"Indeed, sir, it's not fit for you to go in, for Hetty's in the middle o' making the butter, for the churning was thrown late, and I'm quite ashamed." This Mrs. Poyser said blushing, and believing that the Captain was really interested in her milk-pans, and would adjust his opinion of her to the appearance of her dairy.

"Oh, I've no doubt it's in capital order. Take me in," said the Captain, himself leading the way, while Mrs. Poyser followed.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE DAIRY.

THE dairy was certainly worth looking at: it was a scene to sicken for with a sort of calenture in hot and dusty streets — such coolness, such purity, such fresh fragrance of new-pressed cheese, of firm butter, of wooden vessels perpetually bathed in pure water; such soft coloring of red earthenware and creamy surfaces, brown wood and polished tin, gray limestone and rich orange-red rust on the iron weights and hooks and hinges. But one gets only a confused notion of these details when they surround a distractingly pretty girl of seventeen, standing on little pattens and rounding her dimpled arm to lift a pound of butter out of the scale.

Hetty blushed a deep rose-color when Captain Donnithorne entered the dairy and spoke to her; but it was not at all a distressed blush, for it was inwreathed with smiles and dimples, and with sparkles from under long curled dark eyelashes; and while her aunt was discoursing to him about the limited amount of milk that was to be spared for butter and cheese so long as the calves were not all weaned, and a large quantity but inferior quality of milk yielded by the short-horn, which had been bought on experiment, together with other matters which must be interesting to a young gentleman who would one day be a landlord, Hetty tossed and patted her pound of butter with quite a self-possessed, coquettish air, slyly conscious that no turn of her head was lost.

There are various orders of beauty, causing men to make fools of themselves in various styles, from the desperate to the sheepish; but there is one order of beauty which seems made to turn the heads not only of men, but of all intelligent

mammals, even of women. It is a beauty like that of kittens, or very small downy ducks making gentle rippling noises with their soft bills, or babies just beginning to toddle and to engage in conscious mischief—a beauty with which you can never be angry, but that you feel ready to crush for inability to comprehend the state of mind into which it throws you. Hetty Sorrel's was that sort of beauty. Her aunt, Mrs. Poyser, who professed to despise all personal attractions, and intended to be the severest of mentors, continually gazed at Hetty's charms by the sly, fascinated in spite of herself; and after administering such a scolding as naturally flowed from her anxiety to do well by her husband's niece—who had no mother of her own to scold her, poor thing!—she would often confess to her husband, when they were safe out of hearing, that she firmly believed, “the naughtier the little hussy behaved, the prettier she looked.”

It is of little use for me to tell you that Hetty's cheek was like a rose-petal, that dimples played about her pouting lips, that her large dark eyes hid a soft roguishness under their long lashes, and that her curly hair, though all pushed back under her round cap while she was at work, stole back in dark delicate rings on her forehead, and about her white shell-like ears; it is of little use for me to say how lovely was the contour of her pink-and-white neckerchief, tucked into her low plum-colored stuff bodice, or how the linen butter-making apron, with its bib, seemed a thing to be imitated in silk by duchesses, since it fell in such charming lines, or how her brown stockings and thick-soled buckled shoes lost all that clumsiness which they must certainly have had when empty of her foot and ankle;—of little use, unless you have seen a woman who affected you as Hetty affected her beholders, for otherwise, though you might conjure up the image of a lovely woman, she would not in the least resemble that distracting kitten-like maiden. I might mention all the divine charms of a bright spring day, but if you had never in your life utterly forgotten yourself in straining your eyes after the mounting lark, or in wandering through the still lanes when the fresh-opened blossoms fill them with a sacred silent beauty like that of fretted aisles, where would be the use of my descriptive catalogue? I could never make you know what I meant by a bright spring day. Hetty's was a spring-tide beauty; it was the beauty of young frisking things, round-limbed, gambolling, circumventing you by a false air of innocence—the innocence of a young star-browed calf, for

example, that, being inclined for a promenade out of bounds, leads you a severe steeple-chase over hedge and ditch, and only comes to a stand in the middle of a bog.

And they are the prettiest attitudes and movements into which a pretty girl is thrown in making up butter — tossing movements that give a charming curve to the arm, and a side-ward inclination of the round white neck; little patting and rolling movements with the palm of the hand, and nice adaptations and finishings which cannot at all be effected without a great play of the pouting mouth and the dark eyes. And then the butter itself seems to communicate a fresh charm — it is so pure, so sweet-scented; it is turned off the mould with such a beautiful firm surface, like marble in a pale yellow light! Moreover, Hetty was particularly clever at making up the butter; it was the one performance of hers that her aunt allowed to pass without severe criticism; so she handled it with all the grace that belongs to mastery.

"I hope you will be ready for a great holiday on the thirtieth of July, Mrs. Poyser," said Captain Donnithorne, when he had sufficiently admired the dairy, and given several improvised opinions on Swede turnips and short-horns. "You know what is to happen then, and I shall expect you to be one of the guests who come earliest and leave latest. Will you promise me your hand for two dances, Miss Hetty? If I don't get your promise now, I know I shall hardly have a chance, for all the smart young farmers will take care to secure you."

Hetty smiled and blushed, but before she could answer, Mrs. Poyser interposed, scandalized at the mere suggestion that the young squire could be excluded by any meaner partners.

"Indeed, sir, you are very kind to take that notice of her. And I'm sure, whenever you're pleased to dance with her, she'll be proud and thankful, if she stood still all the rest o' th' evening."

"Oh no, no, that would be too cruel to all the other young fellows who can dance. But you will promise me two dances, won't you?" the Captain continued, determined to make Hetty look at him and speak to him.

Hetty dropped the prettiest little courtesy, and stole a half-shy, half-coquettish glance at him as she said —

"Yes, thank you, sir."

"And you must bring all your children, you know, Mrs. Poyser; your little Totty, as well as the boys. I want all

the youngest children on the estate to be there — all those who will be fine young men and women when I'm a bald old fellow."

"Oh dear, sir, that 'ull be a long time first," said Mrs. Poyser, quite overcome at the young squire's speaking so lightly of himself, and thinking how her husband would be interested in hearing her recount this remarkable specimen of high-born humor. The Captain was thought to be "very full of his jokes," and was a great favorite throughout the estate on account of his free manners. Every tenant was quite sure things would be different when the reins got into his hands — there was to be a millennial abundance of new gates, allowances of lime, and returns of ten per cent.

"But where is Totty to-day?" he said. "I want to see her."

"Where is the little un, Hetty?" said Mrs. Poyser. "She came in here not long ago."

"I don't know. She went into the brewhouse to Nancy, I think."

The proud mother, unable to resist the temptation to show her Totty, passed at once into the back-kitchen, in search of her, not, however, without misgivings lest something should have happened to render her person and attire unfit for presentation.

"And do you carry the butter to market when you've made it?" said the Captain to Hetty, meanwhile.

"Oh no, sir; not when it's so heavy; I'm not strong enough to carry it. Alick takes it on horseback."

"No, I'm sure your pretty arms were never meant for such heavy weights. But you go out a walk sometimes these pleasant evenings, don't you? Why don't you have a walk in the Chase sometimes, now it's so green and pleasant? I hardly ever see you anywhere except at home and at church."

"Aunt doesn't like me to go a-walking only when I'm going somewhere," said Hetty. "But I go through the Chase sometimes."

"And don't you ever go to see Mrs. Best, the housekeeper? I think I saw you once in the housekeeper's room."

"It isn't Mrs. Best, it's Mrs. Pomfret, the lady's maid, as I go to see. She's teaching me tent-stitch and the lace-mending. I'm going to tea with her to-morrow afternoon."

The reason why there had been space for this *tête-à-tête* can only be known by looking into the back-kitchen, where Totty had been discovered rubbing a stray blue-bag against her nose, and in the same moment allowing some liberal indigo

drops to fall on her afternoon pinafore. But now she appeared holding her mother's hand—the end of her round nose rather shiny from a recent and hurried application of soap and water.

"Here she is!" said the Captain, lifting her up and setting her on the low stone shelf. "Here's Totty! By the by, what's her other name? She wasn't christened Totty."

"Oh, sir, we call her sadly out of her name. Charlotte's her christened name. It's a name i' Mr. Poyser's family; his grandmother was named Charlotte. But we began with calling her Lotty, and now it's got to Totty. To be sure it's more like a name for a dog than a Christian child."

"Totty's a capital name. Why, she looks like a Totty. Has she got a pocket on?" said the Captain, feeling in his own waistcoat pockets.

Totty immediately with great gravity lifted up her frock, and showed a tiny pink pocket at present in a state of collapse.

"It dot notin in it," she said, as she looked down at it very earnestly.

"No! what a pity! such a pretty pocket. Well, I think I've got some things in mine that will make a pretty jingle in it. Yes! I declare I've got five little round silver things, and hear what a pretty noise they make in Totty's pink pocket." Here he shook the pocket with the five sixpences in it, and Totty showed her teeth and wrinkled her nose in great glee; but, divining that there was nothing more to be got by staying, she jumped off the shelf and ran away to jingle her pocket in the hearing of Nancy, while her mother called after her, "Oh for shame, you naughty gell! not to thank the Captain for what he's given you. I'm sure, sir, it's very kind of you; but she's spoiled shameful; her father won't have her said nay in anything, and there's no managing her. It's being the youngest, and th' only gell."

"Oh, she's a funny little fatty; I wouldn't have her different. But I must be going now, for I suppose the Rector is waiting for me."

With a "good-by," a bright glance, and a bow to Hetty, Arthur left the dairy. But he was mistaken in imagining himself waited for. The Rector had been so much interested in his conversation with Dinah, that he would not have chosen to close it earlier; and you shall hear now what they had been saying to each other.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## A VOCATION.

DINAH, who had risen when the gentlemen came in, but still kept hold of the sheet she was mending, courtesied respectfully when she saw Mr. Irwine looking at her and advancing towards her. He had never yet spoken to her, or stood face to face with her, and her first thought, as her eyes met his, was, "What a well-favored countenance! Oh that the good seed might fall on that soil, for it would surely flourish." The agreeable impression must have been mutual, for Mr. Irwine bowed to her with a benignant deference, which would have been equally in place if she had been the most dignified lady of his acquaintance.

"You are only a visitor in this neighborhood, I think?" were his first words, as he seated himself opposite to her.

"No, sir, I come from Snowfield, in Stonyshire. But my aunt was very kind, wanting me to have rest from my work there, because I'd been ill, and she invited me to come and stay with her for awhile."

"Ah, I remember Snowfield very well; I once had occasion to go there. It's a dreary bleak place. They were building a cotton-mill there; but that's many years ago now: I suppose the place is a good deal changed by the employment that mill must have brought."

"It is changed so far as the mill has brought people there, who get a livelihood for themselves by working in it, and make it better for the trades-folks. I work in it myself, and have reason to be grateful, for thereby I have enough and to spare. But it's still a bleak place, as you say, sir—very different from this country."

"You have relations living there, probably, so that you are attached to the place as your home?"

"I had an aunt there once; she brought me up, for I was an orphan. But she was taken away seven years ago, and I have no other kindred that I know of, besides my aunt Poyser, who is very good to me, and would have me come and live in this country, which to be sure is a good land,

wherein they eat bread without scarceness. But I'm not free to leave Snowfield, where I was first planted, and have grown deep into it, like the small grass on the hill-top."

"Ah, I dare say you have many religious friends and companions there; you are a Methodist — a Wesleyan, I think?"

"Yes, my aunt at Snowfield belonged to the Society, and I have cause to be thankful for the privileges I have had thereby from my earliest childhood."

"And have you been long in the habit of preaching? — for I understand you preached at Hayslope last night."

"I first took to the work four years since, when I was twenty-one."

"Your Society sanctions women's preaching, then?"

"It doesn't forbid them, sir, when they've a clear call to the work, and when their ministry is owned by the conversion of sinners, and the strengthening of God's people. Mrs. Fletcher, as you may have heard about, was the first woman to preach in the Society, I believe, before she was married, when she was Miss Bosanquet; and Mr. Wesley approved of her undertaking the work. She had a great gift, and there are many others now living who are precious fellow-helpers in the work of the ministry. I understand there's been voices raised against it in the Society of late, but I cannot but think their counsel will come to naught. It isn't for men to make channels for God's Spirit, as they make channels for the water-courses, and say, 'Flow here, but flow not there.'"

"But don't you find some danger among your people — I don't mean to say that it is so with you, far from it — but don't you find sometimes that both men and women fancy themselves channels for God's Spirit, and are quite mistaken, so that they set about a work for which they are unfit, and bring holy things into contempt?"

"Doubtless it is so sometimes; for there have been evil-doers among us who have sought to deceive the brethren, and some there are who deceived their own selves. But we are not without discipline and correction to put a check upon these things. There's a very strict order kept among us, and the brethren and sisters watch for each other's souls as they that must give account. They don't go every one his own way and say, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'"

"But tell me — if I may ask, and I am really interested in knowing it — how you first came to think of preaching?"

"Indeed, sir, I didn't think of it at all — I'd been used from the time I was sixteen to talk to the little children, and

teach them, and sometimes I had had my heart enlarged to speak in class, and was much drawn out in prayer with the sick. But I had felt no call to preach; for when I'm not greatly wrought upon, I'm too much given to sit still and keep by myself: it seems as if I could sit silent all day long with the thought of God overflowing my soul—as the pebbles lie bathed in the Willow Brook. For thoughts are so great—aren't they, sir? They seem to lie upon us like a deep flood; and it's my besetment to forget where I am and everything about me, and lose myself in thoughts that I could give no account of, for I could neither make a beginning nor ending of them in words. That was my way as long as I can remember; but sometimes it seemed as if speech came to me without any will of my own, and words were given to me that came out as the tears come, because our hearts are full and we can't help it. And those were always times of great blessing, though I had never thought it could be so with me before a congregation of people. But, sir, we are led on, like the little children, by a way that we know not. I was called to preach quite suddenly, and since then I have never been left in doubt about the work that was laid upon me."

"But tell me the circumstances—just how it was, the very day you began to preach."

"It was one Sunday I walked with brother Marlowe, who was an aged man, one of the local preachers, all the way to Hetton-Deeps—that's a village where the people get their living by working in the lead-mines, and where there's no church nor preacher, but they live like sheep without a shepherd. It's better than twelve miles from Snowfield, so we set out early in the morning, for it was summer-time; and I had a wonderful sense of the Divine love as we walked over the hills, where there's no trees, you know, sir, as there is here, to make the sky look smaller, but you see the heavens stretched out like a tent, and you feel the everlasting arms around you. But before we got to Hetton, brother Marlowe was seized with a dizziness that made him afraid of falling, for he overworked himself sadly, at his years, in watching and praying, and walking so many miles to speak the Word, as well as carrying on his trade of linen-weaving. And when we got to the village, the people were expecting him, for he'd appointed the time and the place when he was there before, and such of them as cared to hear the Word of Life were assembled on a spot where the cottages was thickest, so as others might be drawn to come. But he felt as he couldn't stand up to



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preach, and he was forced to lie down in the first of the cottages we came to. So I went to tell the people, thinking we'd go into one of the houses, and I would read and pray with them. But as I passed along by the cottages and saw the aged and trembling women at the doors, and the hard looks of the men, who seemed to have their eyes no more filled with the sight of the Sabbath morning than if they had been dumb oxen that never looked up to the sky, I felt a great movement in my soul, and I trembled as if I was shaken by a strong spirit entering into my weak body. And I went to where the little flock of people was gathered together, and stepped on the low wall that was built against the green hillside, and I spoke the words that were given to me abundantly. And they all came round me out of all the cottages, and many wept over their sins, and have since been joined to the Lord. That was the beginning of my preaching, sir, and I've preached ever since."

Dinah had let her work fall during this narrative, which she uttered in her usual simple way, but with that sincere, articulate, thrilling treble, by which she always mastered her audience. She stooped now to gather up her sewing, and then went on with it as before. Mr. Irwine was deeply interested. He said to himself, "He must be a miserable prig who would act the pedagogue here: one might as well go and lecture the trees for growing in their own shape."

"And you never feel any embarrassment from the sense of your youth—that you are a lovely young woman on whom men's eyes are fixed?" he said aloud.

"No, I've no room for such feelings, and I don't believe the people ever take notice about that. I think, sir, when God makes His presence felt through us, we are like the burning bush: Moses never took any heed what sort of bush it was—he only saw the brightness of the Lord. I've preached to as rough ignorant people as can be in the villages about Snowfield—men that looked very hard and wild: but they never said an uncivil word to me, and often thanked me kindly as they made way for me to pass through the midst of them."

"*That*, I can believe—that I can well believe," said Mr. Irwine, emphatically. "And what did you think of your hearers last night, now? Did you find them quiet and attentive?"

"Very quiet, sir; but I saw no signs of any great work upon them, except in a young girl named Bessy Cranage,

towards whom my heart yearned greatly, when my eyes first fell on her blooming youth, given up to folly and vanity. I had some private talk and prayer with her afterwards, and I trust her heart is touched. But I've noticed, that in those villages where the people lead a quiet life among the green pastures and the still waters, tilling the ground and tending the cattle, there's a strange deadness to the Word, as different as can be from the great towns, like Leeds, where I once went to visit a holy woman who preaches there. It's wonderful how rich is the harvest of souls up those high-walled streets, where you seemed to walk as in a prison-yard, and the ear is deafened with the sounds of worldly toil. I think maybe it is because the promise is sweeter when this life is so dark and weary, and the soul gets more hungry when the body is ill at ease."

"Why, yes, our farm-laborers are not easily roused. They take life almost as slowly as the sheep and cows. But we have some intelligent workmen about here. I dare say you know the Bedes; Seth Bede, by the by, is a Methodist."

"Yes, I know Seth well, and his brother Adam a little. Seth is a gracious young man — sincere and without offence; and Adam is like the patriarch Joseph, for his great skill and knowledge, and the kindness he shows to his brother and his parents."

"Perhaps you don't know the trouble that has just happened to them? Their father, Matthias Bede, was drowned in the Willow Brook last night, not far from his own door. I'm going now to see Adam."

"Ah, their poor aged mother!" said Dinah, dropping her hands, and looking before her with pitying eyes, as if she saw the object of her sympathy. "She will mourn heavily; for Seth has told me she's of an anxious, troubled heart. I must go and see if I can give her any help."

As she rose and was beginning to fold up her work, Captain Donnithorne, having exhausted all plausible pretexts for remaining among the milk-pans, came out of the dairy, followed by Mrs. Poyser. Mr. Irwine now rose also, and, advancing towards Dinah, held out his hand, and said —

"Good-by. I hear you are going away soon; but this will not be the last visit you will pay your aunt—so we shall meet again, I hope."

His cordiality towards Dinah set all Mrs. Poyser's anxieties at rest, and her face was brighter than usual, as she said, —

"I've never asked after Mrs. Irwine and the Miss Irwines, sir; I hope they're as well as usual."

"Yes, thank you, Mrs. Poyser, except that Miss Anne has one of her bad headaches to-day. By the by, we all liked that nice cream-cheese you sent us — my mother especially."

"I'm very glad, indeed, sir. It is but seldom I make one, but I remembered Mrs. Irwine was fond of 'om. Please to give my duty to her, and to Miss Kate and Miss Anne. They've never beon to look at my poultry this long while, and I've got some beautiful speckled chickens, black and white, as Miss Kate might like to have some of amongst hers."

"Well, I'll tell her; she must come and see them. Good-by," said the Rector, mounting his horse.

"Just ride slowly on, Irwine," said Captain Donnithorne, mounting also. "I'll overtake you in three minutes. I'm only going to speak to the shepherd about the whelps. Good-by, Mrs. Poyser; tell your husband I shall come and have a long talk with him soon."

Mrs. Poyser courtesied duly, and watched the two horses until they had disappeared from the yard, amidst great excitement on the part of the pigs and the poultry, and under the furious indignation of the bull-dog, who performed a Pyrrhic dance, that every moment seemed to threaten the breaking of his chain. Mrs. Poyser delighted in this noisy exit; it was a fresh assurance to her that the farmyard was well guarded, and that no loiterers could enter unobserved; and it was not until the gate had closed behind the Captain that she turned into the kitchen again, where Dinah stood with her bonnet in her hand, waiting to speak to her aunt, before she set out for Lisbeth Bede's cottage.

Mrs. Poyser, however, though she noticed the bonnet, deferred remarking on it until she had disburdened herself of her surprise at Mr. Irwine's behavior.

"Why, Mr. Irwine wasn't angry, then? What did he say to you, Dinah? Didn't he scold you for preaching?"

"No, he was not at all angry; he was very friendly to me. I was quite drawn out to speak to him; I hardly know how, for I had always thought of him as a worldly Sadducee. But his countenance is as pleasant as the morning sunshine."

"Pleasant! and what else did y' expect to find him but pleasant?" said Mrs. Poyser, impatiently, resuming her knitting. "I should think his countenance is pleasant indeed! and him a gentleman born, and's got a mother like a picture. You may go the country round, and not find such another woman turned sixty-six. It's summat-like to see such a man as that i' the desk of a Sunday! As I say to Poyser, it's like

looking at a full crop o' wheat, or a pasture with a fine dairy o' cows in it; it makes you think the world's comfortable-like. But as for such creatures as you Methodisses run after, I'd as soon go to look at a lot o' bare-ribbed runts on a common. Fine folks they are to tell you what's right, as look as if they'd never tasted nothing better than bacon-sword and sour-cake i' their lives. But what did Mr. Irwine say to you about that fool's trick o' preaching on the Green?"

"He only said he'd heard of it; he didn't seem to feel any displeasure about it. But, dear aunt, don't think any more about that. He told me something that I'm sure will cause you sorrow, as it does me. Thias Bede was drowned last night in the Willow Brook, and I'm thinking that the aged mother will be greatly in need of comfort. Perhaps I can be of use to her, so I have fetched my bonnet and am going to set out."

"Dear heart, dear heart! But you must have a cup o' tea first, child," said Mrs. Poyser, falling at once from the key of B with five sharps to the frank and genial C. "The kettle's boiling — we'll have it ready in a minute; and the young uns 'ull be in and wanting theirs directly. I'm quite willing you should go and see th' old woman, for you're one as is allays welcome in trouble, Methodist or no Methodist; but, for the matter o' that, it's the flesh and blood folks are made on as makes the difference. Some cheeses are made o' skimmed milk and some o' new milk, and it's no matter what you call 'em, you may tell which is which by the look and the smell. But as to Thias Bede, he's better out o' the way nor in — God forgi' me for saying so — for he's done little this ten year but make trouble for them as belonged to him; and I think it 'ud be well for you to take a little bottle o' rum for th' old woman, for I dare say she's got never a drop o' nothing to comfort her inside. Sit down, child, and be easy, for you sha'n't stir out till you've had a cup o' tea, and so I tell you."

During the latter part of this speech, Mrs. Poyser had been reaching down the tea-things from the shelves, and was on her way towards the pantry for the loaf (followed close by Totty, who had made her appearance on the rattling of the tea-cups), when Hetty came out of the dairy relieving her tired arms by lifting them up, and clasping her hands at the back of her head.

"Molly," she said, rather languidly, "just run out and get me a bunch of dock-leaves: the butter's ready to pack up now."

"D' you hear what's happened, Hetty?" said her aunt.

"No; how should I hear anything?" was the answer, in a pettish tone.

"Not as you'd care much, I dare say, if you did hear; for you're too feather-headed to mind if everybody was dead, so as you could stay up-stairs a-dressing yourself for two hours by the clock. But anybody besides yourself 'ud mind about such things happening to them as think a deal more of you than you deserve. But Adam Bede and all his kin might be drowned for what you'd care—you'd be perking at the glass the next minute."

"Adam Bede—drowned?" said Hetty, letting her arms fall, and looking rather bewildered, but suspecting that her aunt was as usual exaggerating with a didactic purpose.

"No, my dear, no," said Dinah, kindly, for Mrs. Poyser had passed on to the pantry without deigning more precise information. "Not Adam. Adam's father, the old man, is drowned. He was drowned last night in the Willow Brook. Mr. Irwine has just told me about it."

"Oh, how dreadful!" said Hetty, looking serious, but not deeply affected; and as Molly now entered with the dock-leaves, she took them silently and returned to the dairy without asking further questions.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### HETTY'S WORLD.

WHILE she adjusted the broad leaves that set off the pale fragrant butter as the primrose is set off by its nest of green, I am afraid Hetty was thinking a great deal more of the looks Captain Donnithorne had cast at her than of Adam and his troubles. Bright, admiring glances from a handsome young gentleman, with white hands, a gold chain, occasional regimentals, and wealth and grandeur immeasurable—those were the warm rays that set poor Hetty's heart vibrating, and playing its little foolish tunes over and over again. We do not hear that Memnon's statue gave forth its melody at all under the rushing of the mightiest wind, or in response to any other influence divine or human than certain shortlived sunbeams of morning; and we must learn to accommodate ourselves to the discovery that some of those cunningly-fashioned instruments called human souls have only a very limited range of music, and will not vibrate in the least under a

touch that fills others with tremulous rapture or quivering agony.

Hetty was quite used to the thought that people liked to look at her. She was not blind to the fact that young Luke Britton of Broxton came to Hayslope Church on a Sunday afternoon on purpose that he might see her; and that he would have made much more decided advances if her uncle Poyser, thinking but lightly of a young man whose father's land was so foul as old Luke Britton's, had not forbidden her aunt to encourage him by any civilities. She was aware, too, that Mr. Craig, the gardener at the Chase, was over head and ears in love with her, and had lately made unmistakable avowals in luscious strawberries and hyperbolic peas. She knew still better, that Adam Bede—tall, upright, clever, brave Adam Bede—who carried such authority with all the people round about, and whom her uncle was always delighted to see of an evening, saying that "Adam knew a fine sight more o' the natur o' things than those as thought themselves his betters"—she knew that this Adam, who was often rather stern to other people, and not much given to run after the lasses, could be made to turn pale or red any day by a word or a look from her. Hetty's sphere of comparison was not large, but she couldn't help perceiving that Adam was "something like" a man; always knew what to say about things, could tell her uncle how to prop the hovel, and had mended the churn in no time; knew, with only looking at it, the value of the chestnut-tree that was blown down, and why the damp came in the walls, and what they must do to stop the rats; and wrote a beautiful hand that you could read off, and could do figures in his head—a degree of accomplishment totally unknown among the richest farmers of that country-side. Not at all like that slouching Luke Britton, who, when she once walked with him all the way from Broxton to Hayslope, had only broken silence to remark that the gray goose had begun to lay. And as for Mr. Craig, the gardener, he was a sensible man enough, to be sure, but he was knock-kneed, and had a queer sort of sing-song in his talk; moreover, on the most charitable supposition, he must be far on the way to forty.

Hetty was quite certain her uncle wanted her to encourage Adam, and would be pleased for her to marry him. For those were times when there was no rigid demarcation of rank between the farmer and the respectable artisan, and on the home hearth, as well as in the public-house, they



might be seen taking their jug of ale together; the farmer having a latent sense of capital, and of weight in parish affairs, which sustained him under his conspicuous inferiority in conversation. Martin Poyser was not a frequenter of public-houses, but he liked a friendly chat over his own home-brewed; and though it was pleasant to lay down the law to a stupid neighbor who had no notion how to make the best of his farm, it was also an agreeable variety to learn something from a clever fellow like Adam Bede. Accordingly, for the last three years — ever since he had superintended the building of the new barn — Adam had always been made welcome at the Hall Farm, especially of a winter evening, when the whole family, in patriarchal fashion, master and mistress, children and servants, were assembled in that glorious kitchen, at well-graduated distances from the blazing fire. And for the last two years, at least, Hetty had been in the habit of hearing her uncle say, "Adam Bede may be working for wage now, but he'll be a master-man some day, as sure as I sit in this chair. Mester Burge is in the right on't to want him to go partners and marry his daughter, if it's true what they say; the woman as marries him 'ull have a good take, be't Lady-day or Michaelmas," — a remark which Mrs. Poyser always followed up with her cordial assent. "Ah," she would say, "it's all very fine having a ready-made rich man, but may-happen he'll be a ready-made fool; and it's no use filling your pocket full o' money if you've got a hole in the corner. It'll do you no good to sit in a spring-cart o' your own, if you've got a soft to drive you: he'll soon turn you over into the ditch. I allays said I'd never marry a man as had got no brains; for where's the use of a woman having brains of her own if she's tackled to a geek as everybody's a-laughing at? She might as well dress herself fine to sit baok'ards on a donkey."

These expressions, though figurative, sufficiently indicated the bent of Mrs. Poyser's mind with regard to Adam; and though she and her husband might have viewed the subject differently if Hetty had been a daughter of their own, it was clear that they would have welcomed the match with Adam for a penniless niece. For what could Hetty have been but a servant elsewhere, if her uncle had not taken her in and brought her up as a domestic help to her aunt, whose health since the birth of Totty had not been equal to more positive labor than the superintendence of servants and children? But Hetty had never given Adam any steady encouragement.

Even in the moments when she was most thoroughly conscious of his superiority to her other admirers, she had never brought herself to think of accepting him. She liked to feel that this strong, skilful, keen-eyed man was in her power, and would have been indignant if he had shown the least sign of slipping from under the yoke of her coquettish tyranny, and attaching himself to the gentle Mary Burge, who would have been grateful enough for the most trifling notice from him. "Mary Burge, indeed! such a sallow-faced girl: if she put on a bit of pink ribbon, she looked as yellow as a crow-flower, and her hair was as straight as a hank of cotton." And always when Adam stayed away for several weeks from the Hall Farm, and otherwise made some show of resistance to his passion as a foolish one, Hetty took care to entice him back into the net by little airs of meekness and timidity, as if she were in trouble at his neglect. But as to marrying Adam, that was a very different affair! There was nothing in the world to tempt her to do that. Her cheeks never grew a shade deeper when his name was mentioned; she felt no thrill when she saw him passing along the causeway by the window, or advancing towards her unexpectedly in the footpath across the meadow; she felt nothing when his eyes rested on her, but the cold triumph of knowing that he loved her, and would not care to look at Mary Burge: he could no more stir in her the emotions that make the sweet intoxication of young love, than the mere picture of a sun can stir the spring sap in the subtle fibres of the plant. She saw him as he was—a poor man, with old parents to keep, who would not be able, for a long while to come, to give her even such luxuries as she shared in her uncle's house. And Hetty's dreams were all of luxuries: to sit in a carpeted parlor, and always wear white stockings: to have some large beautiful ear-rings, such as were all the fashion; to have Nottingham lace round the top of her gown, and something to make her handkerchief smell nice, like Miss Lydia Donnithorne's when she drew it out at church; and not to be obliged to get up early or be scolded by anybody. She thought, if Adam had been rich and could have given her these things, she loved him well enough to marry him.

But for the last few weeks a new influence had come over Hetty—vague, atmospheric, shaping itself into no self-confessed hopes or prospects, but producing a pleasant narcotic effect, making her tread the ground and go about her work in a sort of dream, unconscious of weight or effort, and showing

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her all things through a soft, liquid veil, as if she were living not in this solid world of brick and stone, but in a beautiful world, such as the sun lights up for us in the waters. Hetty had become aware that Mr. Arthur Donnithorne would take a good deal of trouble for the chance of seeing her; that he always placed himself at church so as to have the fullest view of her both sitting and standing; that he was constantly finding reasons for calling at the Hall Farm, and always would contrive to say something for the sake of making her speak to him and look at him. The poor child no more conceived at present the idea that the young squire could ever be her lover, than a baker's pretty daughter in the crowd, whom a young emperor distinguishes by an imperial but admiring smile, conceives that she shall be made empress. But the baker's daughter goes home and dreams of the handsome young emperor, and perhaps weighs the flour amiss while she is thinking what a heavenly lot it must be to have him for a husband: and so poor Hetty had got a face and a presence haunting her waking and sleeping dreams; bright, soft glances had penetrated her, and suffused her life with a strange, happy languor. The eyes that shed those glances were really not half so fine as Adam's, which sometimes looked at her with a sad, beseeching tenderness; but they had found a ready medium in Hetty's little silly imagination, whereas Adam's could get no entrance through that atmosphere. For three weeks, at least, her inward life had consisted of little else than living through in memory the looks and words Arthur had directed towards her — of little else than recalling the sensations with which she heard his voice outside the house, and saw him enter, and became conscious that his eyes were fixed on her, and then became conscious that a tall figure, looking down on her with eyes that seemed to touch her, was coming nearer in clothes of beautiful texture, with an odor like that of a flower-garden borne on the evening breeze. Foolish thoughts! But all this happened, you must remember, nearly sixty years ago, and Hetty was quite uneducated — a simple farmer's girl, to whom a gentleman with a white hand was dazzling as an Olympian god. Until to-day, she had never looked farther into the future than to the next time Captain Donnithorne would come to the Farm, or the next Sunday when she should see him at church; but now she thought, perhaps he would try to meet her when she went to the Chase to-morrow — and if he should speak to her, and walk a little way, when nobody was

by! That had never happened yet; and now her imagination, instead of retracing the past, was busy fashioning what would happen to-morrow — whereabout in the Chase she should see him coming towards her, how she should put her new rose-colored ribbon on, which he had never seen, and what he would say to her to make her return his glance — a glance which she would be living through in her memory, over and over again, all the rest of the day.

In this state of mind, how could Hetty give any feeling to Adam's troubles, or think much about poor old Thias being drowned? Young souls, in such pleasant delirium as hers, are as unsympathetic as butterflies sipping nectar; they are isolated from all appeals by a barrier of dreams — by invisible looks and impalpable arms.

While Hetty's hands were busy packing up the butter, and her head filled with these pictures of the morrow, Arthur Dounithorne, riding by Mr. Irwine's side towards the valley of the Willow Brook, had also certain indistinct anticipations, running as an under-current in his mind while he was listening to Mr. Irwine's account of Dinah; — indistinct, yet strong enough to make him feel rather conscious when Mr. Irwine suddenly said, —

"What fascinated you so in Mrs. Poyser's dairy, Arthur? Have you become an amateur of damp quarries and skimming-dishes?"

Arthur knew the Rector too well to suppose that a clever invention would be of any use, so he said, with his accustomed frankness, —

"No, I went to look at the pretty butter-maker, Hetty Sorrel. She's a perfect Hebe; and if I were an artist, I would paint her. It's amazing what pretty girls one sees among the farmers' daughters, when the men are such clowns. That common round red face one sees sometimes in the men — all cheek and no features, like Martin Poyser's — comes out in the women of the family as the most charming phiz imaginable."

"Well, I have no objection to your contemplating Hetty in an artistic light, but I must not have you feeding her vanity, and filling her little noddle with the notion that she's a great beauty, attractive to fine gentlemen, or you will spoil her for a poor man's wife — honest Craig's, for example, whom I have seen bestowing soft glances on her. The little puss seems already to have airs enough to make a husband as miserable as it's a law of nature for a quiet man to be when he marries

a beauty. Apropos of marrying, I hope our friend Adam will get settled, now the poor old man's gone. He will only have his mother to keep in future, and I've a notion that there's a kindness between him and that nice modest girl, Mary Burge, from something that fell from old Jounathan one day when I was talking to him. But when I mentioned the subject to Adam he looked uneasy, and turned the conversation. I suppose the love-making doesn't run smooth, or perhaps Adam hangs back till he's in a better position. He has independence of spirit enough for two men — rather an excess of pride, if anything."

"That would be a capital match for Adam. He would slip into old Burge's shoes, and make a fine thing of that building business, I'll answer for him. I should like to see him well settled in this parish; he would be ready then to act as my grand-vizier when I wanted one. We could plan no end of repairs and improvements together. I've never seen the girl, though, I think — at least I've never looked at her."

"Look at her next Sunday at church — she sits with her father on the left of the reading-desk. You needn't look quite so much at Hetty Sorrel then. When I've made up my mind that I can't afford to buy a tempting dog, I take no notice of him, because if he took a strong fancy to me, and looked lovingly at me, the struggle between arithmetic and inclination might become unpleasantly severe. I pique myself on my wisdom there, Arthur, and as an old fellow to whom wisdom has become cheap, I bestow it upon you."

"Thank you. It may stand me in good stead some day, though I don't know that I have any present use for it. Bless me! how the brook has overflowed. Suppose we have a canter, now we're at the bottom of the hill."

That is the great advantage of dialogue on horseback; it can be merged any minute into a trot or a canter, and one might have escaped from Socrates himself in the saddle. The two friends were free from the necessity of further conversation till they pulled up in the lane behind Adam's cottage.

## CHAPTER X.

## DINAH VISITS LISBETH.

AT five o'clock Lisbeth came down-stairs with a large key in her hand: it was the key of the chamber where her husband lay dead. Throughout the day, except in her occasional outbursts of wailing grief, she had been in incessant movement, performing the initial duties to her dead with the awe and exactitude that belong to religious rites. She had brought out her little store of bleached linen, which she had for long years kept in reserve for this supreme use. It seemed but yesterday — that time so many midsummers ago, when she had told Thias where this linen lay, that he might be sure and reach it out for her when *she* died, for she was the elder of the two. Then there had been the work of cleansing to the strictest purity every object in the sacred chamber, and of removing from it every trace of common daily occupation. The small window which had hitherto freely let in the frosty moonlight or the warm summer sunrise on the working man's slumber, must now be darkened with a fair white sheet, for this was the sleep which is as sacred under the bare rafters as in ceiled houses. Lisbeth had even mended a long-neglected and unnoticeable rent in the checkered bit of bed-curtain; for the moments were few and precious now in which she would be able to do the smallest office of respect or love for the still corpse, to which in all her thoughts she attributed some consciousness. Our dead are never dead to us until we have forgotten them: they can be injured by us, they can be wounded; they know all our penitence, all our aching sense that their place is empty, all the kisses we bestow on the smallest relic of their presence. And the aged peasant-woman most of all believes that her dead are conscious. Decent burial was what Lisbeth had been thinking of for herself through years of thrift, with an indistinct expectation that she should know when she was being carried to the churchyard, followed by her husband and her sons; and now she felt as if the greatest work of her life were to be done in seeing that Thias was buried decently



before her — under the white thorn, where once, in a dream, she had thought she lay in the coffin, yet all the while saw the sunshine above, and smelt the white blossoms that were so thick upon the thorn the Sunday she went to be churched after Adam was born.

But now she had done everything that could be done to-day in the chamber of death — had done it all herself, with some aid from her sons in lifting, for she would let no one be fetched to help her from the village, not being fond of female neighbors generally; and her favorite Dolly, the old house-keeper at Mr. Burge's, who had come to condole with her in the morning as soon as she heard of Thias's death, was too dim-sighted to be of much use. She had locked the door, and now held the key in her hand, as she threw herself wearily into a chair that stood out of its place in the middle of the house floor, where in ordinary times she would never have consented to sit. The kitchen had had none of her attention that day; it was soiled with the tread of muddy shoes, and untidy with clothes and other objects out of place. But what at another time would have been intolerable to Lisbeth's habits of order and cleanliness, seemed to her now just what should be: it was right that things should look strange and disordered and wretched, now the old man had come to his end in that sad way: the kitchen ought not to look as if nothing had happened. Adam, overcome with the agitations and exertions of the day after his night of hard work, had fallen asleep on a bench in the workshop; and Seth was in the back-kitchen making a fire of sticks that he might get the kettle to boil, and persuade his mother to have a cup of tea, an indulgence which she rarely allowed herself.

There was no one in the kitchen when Lisbeth entered and threw herself into the chair. She looked round with blank eyes at the dirt and confusion on which the bright afternoon's sun shone dimly; it was all of a piece with the sad confusion of her mind — that confusion which belongs to the first hours of a sudden sorrow, when the poor human soul is like one who has been deposited sleeping among the ruins of a vast city, and wakes up in dreary amazement, not knowing whether it is the growing or the dying day — not knowing why and whence came this illimitable scene of desolation, or why he too finds himself desolate in the midst of it.

At another time Lisbeth's first thought would have been, "Where is Adam?" but the sudden death of her husband had restored him in these hours to that first place in her

affections which he had held six-and-twenty years ago: she had forgotten his faults as we forget the sorrows of our departed childhood, and thought of nothing but the young husband's kindness and the old man's patience. Her eyes continued to wander blankly until Seth came in and began to remove some of the scattered things, and clear the small round deal table that he might set out his mother's tea upon it.

"What art goin' to do?" she said, rather peevishly.

"I want thee to have a cup of tea, mother," answered Seth, tenderly. "It'll do thee good; and I'll put two or three of these things away, and make the house look more comfortable."

"Comfortable! How canst talk o' ma'in' things comfortable? Let a-be, let a-be. There's no comfort for me no more," she went on, the tears coming when she began to speak, "now thy poor feyther's gone, as I'n washed for and mended, an' got's victual for him for thirty ear, an' him allays so pleased wi' iverything I done for him, an' used to be so handy an' do the jobs for me when I war ill an' cumbered wi' th' babby, an' made me the posset an' brought it up-stairs as proud as could be, an' carried the lad as war as heavy as two children for five mile an' ne'er grumbled, all the way to Warson Wake, 'cause I wanted to go an' see my sister, as war dead an' gone the very next Christmas as o'er come. An' him to be drowned in the brook as we passed o'er the day we war married an' come home together, an' he'd made them lots o' shelves for me to put my plates an' things on, an' showed 'em me as proud as could be, 'cause he know'd I should be pleased. An' he war to die an' me not to know, but to be a-sleepin' i' my bed, as if I caredna nought about it. Eh! an' me to live to see that! An' us as war young folks once, an' thought we should do rarely when we war married. Let a-be, lad, let a-be! I wanna ha' no tay: I carena if I ne'er ate nor drink no more. When one end o' th' bridge tumbles down, where's th' use o' th' other stannin'? I may's well die, an' foller my old man. There's no knowin' but he'll want me."

Here Lisbeth broke from words into moans, swaying herself backwards and forwards on her chair. Seth, always timid in his behavior towards his mother, from the sense that he had no influence over her, felt it was useless to attempt to persuade or soothe her, till this passion was past; so he contented himself with tending the back-kitchen fire, and folding up his father's clothes, which had been hanging out to dry since morning; afraid to move about in the room where his mother was, lest he should irritate her further.

But after Lisbeth had been rocking herself and moaning for some minutes, she suddenly pausod, and said aloud to herself—

“I’ll go an’ see arter Adam, for I canna think where he’s gotten; an’ I want him to go up-stairs wi’ me afore it’s dark, for the minutes to look at the corpse is like the meltin’ snow.”

Seth overheard this, and coming into the kitchen again, as his mother rose from her chair, he said—

“Adam’s asleep in the workshop, mother. Thee’dst better not wake him. He was o’erwrought with work and trouble.”

“Wake him? Who’s a-goin’ to wake him? I shanna wake him wi’ lookin’ at him. I hanna seen the lad this two hour—I’d welly forgot as he’d e’er growed up from a babby when’s feyther carried him.”

Adam was seated on a rough bench, his head supported by his arm, which rested from the shoulder to the elbow on the long planing-table in the middle of the workshop. It seemed as if he had sat down for a few minutes’ rest, and had fallen asleep without slipping from his first attitude of sad, fatigued thought. His face, unwashed since yesterday, looked pallid and clammy; his hair was tossed shaggily about his forehead, and his closed eyes had the sunken look which follows upon watching and sorrow. His brow was knit, and his whole face had an expression of weariness and pain. Gyp was evidently uneasy, for he sat on his haunches, resting his nose on his master’s stretched-out leg, and dividing the time between licking the hand that hung listlessly down, and glancing with a listening air towards the door. The poor dog was hungry and restless, but would not leave his master, and was waiting impatiently for some change in the scene. It was owing to this feeling on Gyp’s part, that when Lisbeth came into the workshop, and advanced towards Adam as noiselessly as she could, her intention not to awake him was immediately defeated; for Gyp’s excitement was too great to find vent in anything short of a sharp bark, and in a moment Adam opened his eyes and saw his mother standing before him. It was not very unlike his dream, for his sleep had been little more than living through again, in a fevered delirious way, all that had happened since daybreak, and his mother with her fretful grief was present to him through it all. The chief difference between the reality and the vision was, that in his dream Hetty was continually coming before him in bodily presence—strangely mingling herself as an actor in scenes with which she had nothing to do. She was even by the Willow Brook; she made his mother angry by coming into

the house; and he met her with her smart clothes quite wet through, as he walked in the rain to Treddleston, to tell the coroner. But wherever Hetty came, his mother was sure to follow soon; and when he opened his eyes, it was not at all startling to see her standing near him.

"Eh, my lad, my lad!" Lisbeth burst out immediately, her wailing impulse returning, for grief in its freshness feels the need of associating its loss and its lament with every change of scene and incident, "thee'st got nobody now but thy old mother to torment thee and be a burden to thee: thy poor feyther 'ull ne'er anger thee no more; an' thy mother nay's well go arter him — the sooner the better — for I'm no good to nobody now. One old coat 'ull do to patch another, but it's good for nought else. Thee'dst like to ha' a wife to mend thy clothes an' get thy victual, better nor thy old mother. An' I shall be nought but cumber, a-sittin' i' th' chimuey-corner." (Adam winced and moved uneasily; he dreaded, of all things, to hear his mother speak of Hetty.) "But if thy feyther had lived, he'd ne'er ha' wanted me to go to make room for another, for he could no more ha' done wi'out me nor one side o' the scissars can do wi'out th' other. Eh, we should ha' been both flung away together, an' then I shouldna ha' seen this day, an' one buryin' 'ud ha' done for us both."

Here Lisbeth paused, but Adam sat in pained silence: he could not speak otherwise than tenderly to his mother to-day; but he could not help being irritated by this plaint. It was not possible for poor Lisbeth to know how it affected Adam, any more than it is possible for a wounded dog to know how his moans affect the nerves of his master. Like all complaining women, she complained in the expectation of being soothed, and when Adam said nothing, she was only prompted to complain more bitterly.

"I know thee couldst do better wi'out me, for thee couldst go where thee likedst, an' marry them as thee likedst. But I donna want to say thee nay, let thee bring home who thee wut; I'd ne'er open my lips to find fault, for when folks is old an' o' no use, they may think theirsens well off to get the bit an' the sup, though they'n to swallow ill words wi't. An' if thee'st set thy heart on a lass as'll bring thee nought and waste all, when thee mightest ha' them as 'ud make a man on thee, I'll say nought, now thy feyther's dead an' drowned, for I'm no better nor an old haft when the blade's gone."

Adam, unable to bear this any longer, rose silently from the bench, and walked out of the workshop into the kitchen. But Lisbeth followed him.

"Thee wutna go up-stairs an' sec thy feyther then? I'n done everythin' now, an' he'd like thee to go an' look at him, for he war allays so pleased when thee wast mild to him."

Adam turned round at once and said, "Yes, mother; let us go up-stairs. Come, Seth, let us go together."

They went up-stairs, and for five minutes all was silence. Then the key was turned again, and there was a sound of footsteps on the stairs. But Adam did not come down again; he was too weary and worn-out to encounter more of his mother's querulous grief, and he went to rest on his bed. Lisbeth no sooner entered the kitchen and sat down than she threw her apron over her head, and began to cry and moan, and rock herself as before. Seth thought, "She will be quieter by-and-by, now we have been up-stairs;" and he went into the back-kitchen again, to tend his little fire, hoping that he should presently induce her to have some tea.

Lisbeth had been rocking herself in this way for more than five minutes, giving a low moan with every forward movement of her body, when she suddenly felt a hand placed gently on hers, and a sweet treble voice said to her, "Dear sister, the Lord has sent me to see if I can be a comfort to you."

Lisbeth paused, in a listening attitude, without removing her apron from her face. The voice was strange to her. Could it be her sister's spirit come back to her from the dead after all those years? She trembled, and dared not look.

Dinah, believing that this pause of wonder was in itself a relief for the sorrowing woman, said no more just yet, but quietly took off her bonnet, and then, motioning silence to Seth, who, on hearing her voice, had come in with a beating heart, laid one hand on the back of Lisbeth's chair, and leaned over her, that she might be aware of a friendly presence.

Slowly Lisbeth drew down her apron, and timidly she opened her dim dark eyes. She saw nothing at first but a face—a pure, pale face, with loving gray eyes, and it was quite unknown to her. Her wonder increased; perhaps it *was* an angel. But in the same instant Dinah had laid her hand on Lisbeth's again, and the old woman looked down at it. It was a much smaller hand than her own, but it was not white and delicate, for Dinah had never worn a glove in her life, and her hand bore the traces of labor from her childhood upwards. Lisbeth looked earnestly at the hand for a moment, and then, fixing her eyes again on Dinah's face, said, with something of restored courage, but in a tone of surprise—

"Why, ye're a workin' woman!"

"Yes, I am Dinah Morris, and I work in the cotton-mill when I am at home."

"Ah!" said Lisbeth slowly, still wondering; "ye comed in so light, like the shadow on the wall, an' spoke i' my ear as I thought ye might be a sperrit. Ye've got a'most the face o' one as is a-sittin' on the grave i' Adam's new Bible."

"I come from the Hall Farm now. Yon know Mrs. Poyser—she's my aunt, and sho has heard of your great affliction, and is very sorry; and I'm come to see if I can be any help to you in your trouble; for I know your sons Adam and Seth, and I know you have no daughter; and when the clergyman told me how the hand of God was heavy upon you, my heart went out towards you, and I felt a command to come and be to you in the place of a daughter in this grief, if you will let me."

"Ah! I know who y' are now; y' are a Methody, like Seth; he's tould me on you," said Lisbeth, fretfully, her overpowering sense of pain returning, now her wonder was gone. "Ye'll make it out as trouble's a good thing, like *he* allays does. But where's the use o' talkin' to me a-that'n? Ye canna make the smart less wi' talkin'. Yo'll ne'er make me believe as it's better for me not to ha' my old man die in's bed, if he must die, an' ha' the parson to pray by him, an' me to sit by him, an' tell him ne'er to mind th' ill words I've gi'en him sometimes when I war angered, an' to gi' him a bit an' a sup, as long as a bit an' a sup he'd swallow. But eh! to die i' the cold water, an' us close to him, an' ne'er to know; an' me a-sleepin', as if I ne'er belonged to him no more nor if he'd been a journeyman tramp from nobody knows where!"

Here Lisbeth began to cry and rock herself again; and Dinah said—

"Yes, dear friend, your affliction is great. It would be hardness of heart to say that your trouble was not heavy to bear. God didn't send me to you to make light of your sorrow, but to mourn with you, if you will let me. If you had a table spread for a feast, and was making merry with your friends, you would think it was kind to let me come and sit down and rejoice with you, because you'd think I should like to share those good things; but I should like better to share in your trouble and your labor, and it would seem harder to me if you denied me that. You won't send me away? You're not angry with me for coming?"

"Nay, nay; angered! who said I war angered? It war good

on you to come. An' Seth, why donna ye get her some tay? Ye war in a hurry to get some for me, as had no need, but ye donna think o' gettin' 't for them as wants it. Sit ye down; sit ye down. I thank you kindly for comin', for it's little wage ye get by walkin' through the wet fields to see an old woman like me. . . . Nay, I'n got no daughter o' my own — ne'er had one — an' I warna sorry, for they're poor queechy things, gells is; I allays wanted to ha' lads, as could fend for theirsens. An' the lads 'ull be marryin' — I shall ha' daughters eno', an' too many. But now, do ye make the tay as ye like it, for I'n got no taste i' my mouth this day — it's all one what I swaller — it's all got the taste o' sorrow wi't."

Dinah took care not to betray that she had had her tea, and accepted Lisbeth's invitation very readily, for the sake of persuading the old woman herself to take the food and drink she so much needed after a day of hard work and fasting.

Seth was so happy now Dinah was in the house that he could not help thinking her presence was worth purchasing with a life in which grief incessantly followed upon grief; but the next moment he reproached himself — it was almost as if he were rejoicing in his father's sad death. Nevertheless the joy of being with Dinah *would* triumph: it was like the influence of climate, which no resistance can overcome. And the feeling even suffused itself over his face so as to attract his mother's notice, while she was drinking her tea.

"Thee may'st well talk o' trouble bein' a good thing, Seth, for thee thriv'st on't. Thee look'st as if thee know'dst no more o' care an' cumber nor when thee wast a babby a-lyin' awake i' th' cradle. For thee'dst allays lie still wi' thy eyes open, an' Adam ne'er 'ud lie still a minute when he awakened. Thee wast allays like a bag o' meal as can ne'er be bruised — though, for the matter o' that, thy poor feyther war just such another. But ye've got the same look too" (here Lisbeth turned to Dinah). "I reckon it's wi' bein' a Methody. Not as I'm a-findin' faut wi' ye for't, for ye've no call to be frettin', an' somehow ye looken sorry too. Eh! well, if the Methodies are fond o' trouble, they're like to thrive: it's a pity they canna ha't all, an' take it away from them as donna like it. I could ha' gi'en 'em plenty; for when I'd gotten my old man I war worreted from morn till night; and now he's gone, I'd be glad for the worst o'er again."

"Yes," said Dinah, careful not to oppose any feeling of Lisbeth's, for her reliance, in her smallest words and deeds, on a divine guidance, always issued in that finest woman's tact

which proceeds from acute and ready sympathy — “yes; I remember, too, when my dear aunt died, I longed for the sound of her bad cough in the nights, instead of the silence that came when she was gone. But now, dear friend, drink this other cup of tea and eat a little more.”

“What!” said Lisbeth, taking the cup, and speaking in a less querulous tone, “had ye got no feyther and mother, then, as ye war so sorry about your aunt?”

“No, I never knew a father or mother; my aunt brought me up from a baby. She had no children, for she was never married, and she brought me up as tenderly as if I’d been her own child.”

“Eh, she’d fine work wi’ ye, I’ll warrant, bringin’ ye up from a babby, an’ her a lone woman — it’s ill bringin’ up a cade lamb. But I dare say ye warn a franzy, for ye look as if ye’d ne’er been angered i’ your life. But what did ye do when your aunt died, an’ why didna ye come to live in this country, bein’ as Mrs. Poyser’s your aunt too?”

Dinah, seeing that Lisbeth’s attention was attracted, told her the story of her early life — how she had been brought up to work hard, and what sort of place Snowfield was, and how many people had a hard life there — all the details that she thought likely to interest Lisbeth. The old woman listened, and forgot to be fretful, unconsciously subject to the soothing influence of Dinah’s face and voice. After a while she was persuaded to let the kitchen be made tidy; for Dinah was bent on this, believing that the sense of order and quietude around her would help in disposing Lisbeth to join in the prayer she longed to pour forth at her side. Seth, meanwhile, went out to chop wood; for he surmised that Dinah would like to be left alone with his mother.

Lisbeth sat watching her as she moved about in her still quick way, and said at last, “Ye’ve got a notion o’ cleanin’ up. I wouldna mind ha’in ye for a daughter, for ye wouldna spend the lad’s wage i’ fine clothes an’ waste. Ye’re not like the lasses o’ this country-side. I reckon folks is different at Snowfield from what they are here.”

“They have a different sort of life, many of ’em,” said Dinah; “they work at different things — some in the mill, and many in the mines, in the villages round about. But the heart of man is the same everywhere, and there are the children of this world and the children of light there as well as elsewhere. But we’ve many more Methodists there than in this country.”



"Well, I didna know as the Methody women war like ye, for there's Will Maskery's wife, as they say's a big Methody, isna pleasant to look at, at all. I'd as lief look at a toad. An' I'm thinkin' I wouldna mind if ye'd stay an' sleep here, for I should like to see ye i' th' house i' th' mornin'. But may-happen they'll be lookin' for ye at Mester Poyser's."

"No," said Dinah, "they don't expect me, and I should like to stay, if you'll let me."

"Well, there's room; I'n got my bed laid i' th' little room o'er the back kitchen, an' ye can lie beside me. I'd be glad to ha' ye wi' me to speak to i' th' night, for ye've got a nice way o' talkin'. It puts me i' mind o' the swallows as was under the thack last 'ear, when they fust begun to sing low an' soft-like i' th' mornin'. Eh, but my old man war fond o' them birds! an' so war Adam, but they'n ne'er comed again this 'ear. Happen *they're* dead too."

"There," said Dinah, "now the kitchen looks tidy, and now, dear mother — for I'm your daughter to-night, you know — I should like you to wash your face and have a clean cap on. Do you remember what David did, whon God took away his child from him? While the child was yet alive he fasted and prayed to God to spare it, and he would neither eat nor drink, but lay on the ground all night, beseeching God for the child. But when he knew it was dead, he rose up from the ground and washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes, and ate and drank; and when they asked him how it was that he seemed to have left off grieving now the child was dead, he said, 'While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.'"

"Eh, that's a true word," said Lisbeth. "Yea, my old man wonna come back to me, but I shall go to him — the sooner the better. Well, ye may do as ye like wi' me: there's a clean cap i' that drawer, an' I'll go i' the back-kitchen an' wash my face. An' Seth, thee may'st reach down Adam's new Bible wi' th' picters in, an' she shall read us a chapter. Eh, I like them words — 'I shall go to him, but he wonna come back to me.'"

Dinah and Seth were both inwardly offering thanks for the greater quietness of spirit that had come over Lisbeth. This was what Dinah had been trying to bring about, through all her still sympathy and absence from exhortation. From her

girlhood upwards she had had experience among the sick and the mourning, among minds hardened and shrivelled through poverty and ignorance, and had gained the subtlest perception of the mode in which they could best be touched, and softened into willingness to receive words of spiritual consolation or warning. As Dinah expressed it, "she was never left to herself; but it was always given her when to keep silence and when to speak." And do we not all agree to call rapid thought and noble impulse by the name of inspiration? After our subtlest analysis of the mental process, we must still say, as Dinah did, that our highest thoughts and our best deeds are all given to us.

And so there was earnest prayer — there was faith, love, and hope pouring itself forth that evening in the little kitchen. And poor aged fretful Lisbeth, without grasping any distinct idea, without going through any course of religious emotions, felt a vague sense of goodness and love, and of something right lying underneath and beyond all this sorrowing life. She couldn't understand the sorrow; but, for these moments, under the subduing influence of Dinah's spirit, she felt that she must be patient and still.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### IN THE COTTAGE.

It was but half-past four the next morning, when Dinah, tired of lying awake listening to the birds, and watching the growing light through the little window in the garret roof, rose and began to dress herself very quietly, lest she should disturb Lisbeth. But already some one else was astir in the house, and had gone down-stairs, preceded by Gyp. The dog's patting step was a sure sign that it was Adam who went down; but Dinah was not aware of this, and she thought it was more likely to be Seth, for he had told her how Adam had stayed up working the night before. Seth, however, had only just awakened at the sound of the opening door. The exciting influence of the previous day, heightened at last by Dinah's unexpected presence, had not been counteracted by any bodily weariness, for he had not done his ordinary amount of hard work; and so when he went to bed, it was not till he had tired himself with hours of tossing wakefulness, that drowsi-

ness came, and led on a heavier morning sleep than was usual with him.

But Adam had been refreshed by his long rest, and with his habitual impatience of mere passivity, he was eager to begin the new day, and subdue sadness by his strong will and strong arm. The white mist lay in the valley; it was going to be a bright warm day, and he would start to work again when he had had his breakfast.

"There's nothing but what's bearable as long as a man can work," he said to himself: "the natur o' things doesn't change, though it seems as if one's own life was nothing but change. The square o' four is sixteen, and you must lengthen your lever in proportion to your weight, is as true when a man's miserable as when he's happy; and the best o' working is, it gives you a grip hold o' things outside your own lot."

As he dashed the cold water over his head and face, he felt completely himself again, and with his black eyes as keen as ever, and his thick black hair all glistening with the fresh moisture, he went into the workshop to look out the wood for his father's coffin, intending that he and Seth should carry it with them to Jonathan Burge's, and have the coffin made by one of the workmen there, so that his mother might not see and hear the sad task going forward at home.

He had just gone into the workshop, when his quick ear detected a light rapid foot on the stairs—certainly not his mother's. He had been in bed and asleep when Dinah had come in, in the evening, and now he wondered whose step this could be. A foolish thought came, and moved him strangely. As if it could be Hetty! She was the last person likely to be in the house. And yet he felt reluctant to go and look, and have the clear proof that it was some one else. He stood leaning on a plank he had taken hold of, listening to sounds which his imagination interpreted for him so pleasantly, that the keen strong face became suffused with a timid tenderness. The light footstep moved about the kitchen, followed by the sound of the sweeping brush, hardly making so much noise as the lightest breeze that chases the autumn leaves along the dusty path; and Adam's imagination saw a dimpled face, with dark bright eyes and roguish smiles, looking backward at this brush, and a rounded figure just leaning a little to clasp the handle. A very foolish thought—it could not be Hetty; but the only way of dismissing such nonsense from his head was to go and see *who* it was, for his fancy only got nearer and nearer to belief while he stood

there listening. He loosed the plank, and went to the kitchen door.

"How do you do, Adam Bode?" said Dinah, in her calm treble, pausing from her sweeping, and fixing her mild grave eyes upon him. "I trust you feel rested and strengthened again to bear the burthen and heat of the day."

It was like dreaming of the sunshine, and awaking in the moonlight. Adam had seen Dinah several times, but always at the Hall Farm, where he was not very vividly conscious of any woman's presence except Hetty's, and he had only in the last day or two begun to suspect that Seth was in love with her, so that his attention had not hitherto been drawn towards her for his brother's sake. But now her slim figure, her plain black gown, and her pale serene face, impressed him with all the force that belongs to a reality contrasted with a preoccupying fancy. For the first moment or two he made no answer, but looked at her with the concentrated, examining glance which a man gives to an object in which he has suddenly begun to be interested. Dinah, for the first time in her life, felt a painful self-consciousness; there was something in the lark penetrating glance of this strong man so different from the mildness and timidity of his brother Seth. A faint blush came, which deepened as she wondered at it. This blush recalled Adam from his forgetfulness.

"I was quite taken by surprise; it was very good of you to come and see my mother in her trouble," he said, in a gentle grateful tone, for his quick mind told him at once how she came to be there. "I hope my mother was thankful to have you," he added, wondering rather anxiously what had been Dinah's reception.

"Yes," said Dinah, resuming her work, "she seemed greatly comforted after a while, and she's had a good deal of rest in the night, by times. She was fast asleep when I left her."

"Who was it took the news to the Hall Farm?" said Adam, his thoughts reverting to some one there; he wondered whether *she* had felt anything about it.

"It was Mr. Irwine, the clergyman, told me, and my aunt was grieved for your mother when she heard it, and wanted me to come; and so is my uncle, I'm sure, now he's heard it, but he was gone out to Rosseter all yesterday. They'll look for you there as soon as you've got time to go, for there's nobody round that hearth but what's glad to see you."

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that Adam was longing to hear if Hetty had said anything about their trouble; she was too rigorously truthful for benevolent invention, but she had contrived to say something in which Hetty was tacitly included. Love has a way of cheating itself consciously, like a child who plays at solitary hide-and-seek; it is pleased with assurances that it all the while disbelieves. Adam liked what Dinah had said so much that his mind was directly full of the next visit he should pay to the Hall Farm, when Hetty would perhaps behave more kindly to him than she had ever done before.

"But you won't be there yourself any longer?" he said to Dinah.

"No, I go back to Snowfield on Saturday, and I shall have to set out to Tredleston early, to be in time for the Oakbourne carrier. So I must go back to the farm to-night, that I may have the last day with my aunt and her children. But I can stay here all to-day, if your mother would like me; and her heart seemed inclined towards me last night."

"Ah, then, she's sure to want you to-day. If mother takes to people at the beginning, she's sure to get fond of 'em; but she's a strange way of not liking young women. Though, to be sure," Adam went on, smiling, "her not liking other young women is no reason why she shouldn't like you."

Hitherto Gyp had been assisting at this conversation in motionless silence, seated on his hunches, and alternately looking up in his master's face to watch its expression, and observing Dinah's movements about the kitchen. The kind smile with which Adam uttered the last words was apparently decisive with Gyp of the light in which the stranger was to be regarded, and as she turned round after putting aside her sweeping-brush, he trotted towards her, and put up his muzzle against her hand in a friendly way.

"You see Gyp bids you welcome," said Adam, "and he's very slow to welcome strangers."

"Poor dog!" said Dinah, patting the rough gray coat, "I've a strange feeling about the dumb things as if they wanted to speak, and it was a trouble to 'em because they couldn't. I can't help being sorry for the dogs always, though perhaps there's no need. But they may well have more in them than they know how to make us understand, for we can't say half what we feel, with all our words."

Seth came down now, and was pleased to find Adam talking with Dinah; he wanted Adam to know how much better she was than all other women. But after a few words of greeting,

Adam drew him into the workshop to consult about the coffin, and Dinah went on with her cleaning.

By six o'clock they were all at breakfast with Lisbeth in a kitchen as clean as she could have made it herself. The window and door were open, and the morning air brought with it a mingled scent of southernwood, thyme, and sweet-brier from the patch of garden by the side of the cottage. Dinah did not sit down at first, but moved about, serving the others with the warm porridge and the toasted oat-cake, which she had got ready in the usual way, for she had asked Seth to tell her just what his mother gave them for breakfast. Lisbeth had been unusually silent since she came down-stairs, apparently requiring some time to adjust her ideas to a state of things in which she came down like a lady to find all the work done, and sat still to be waited on. Her new sensations seemed to exclude the remembrance of her grief. At last, after tasting the porridge, she broke silence :

"Ye might ha' made the parridge worse," she said to Dinah ; "I can ate it wi'out its turnin' my stomach. It might ha' been a trifle thicker an' no harm, an' I allays putten a sprig o' mint in mysen ; but how's ye t' know that ? The lads arena like to get folks as'll make their parridge as I'n made it for 'em ; it's well if they get onybody as'll make parridge at all. But ye might do, wi' a bit o' showin' ; for ye're a stirrin' body in a mornin', an' ye've a light heel, an' ye've cleaned th' house well enough for a ma'-shift."

"Makeshift, mother ?" said Adam. "Why, I think the house looks beautiful. I don't know how it could look better."

"Thee dostna know ? — nay ; how's thee to know ? Th' men ne'er know whether the floor's cleaned or catlicked. But thee'll know when thee gets thy parridge burnt, as it's like enough to be when I'n gi'en o'er makin' it. Thee'll think thy mother war good for summat then."

"Dinah," said Seth, "do come and sit down now and have your breakfast. We're all served now."

"Ay, come an' sit ye down — do," said Lisbeth, "an' ate a morsel ; ye'd need, arter bein' upo' your legs this hour an' half a'ready. Come, then," she added, in a tone of complaining affection, as Dinah sat down by her side, "I'll be loath for ye t' go, but ye canna stay much longer, I doubt. I could put up wi' ye i' th' house better nor wi' most folks."

"I'll stay till to-night if you're willing," said Dinah. "I'd stay longer, only I'm going back to Snowfield on Saturday, and I must be with my aunt to-morrow."



"Eh, I'd ne'er go back to that country. My old man come from that Stonyshire side, but he left it when he war a young un, an' i' the right on't too; for he said as there war no wood there, an' it 'ud ha' been a bad country for a carpenter."

"Ah," said Adam, "I remember father telling me when I was a little lad, that he made up his mind if ever he moved it should be south'ard. But I'm not so sure about it. Bartle Massey says — and he knows the South — as the northern men are a finer breed than the southern, harder-headed and stronger-bodied, and a deal taller. And then he says, in some o' those counties it's as flat as the back o' your hand, and you can see nothing of a distance, without climbing up the highest trees. I couldn't abide that: I like to go to work by a road that'll take me up a bit of a hill, and see the fields for miles round me, and a bridge, or a town, or a bit of a steeple here and there. It makes you feel the world's a big place, and there's other men working in it with their heads and hands besides yourself."

"I like th' hills best," said Seth, "when the clouds are over your head, and you see the sun shining ever so far off, over the Loamford way, as I've often done o' late, on the stormy days: it seems to me as if that was heaven where there's always joy and sunshine, though this life's dark and cloudy."

"Oh, I love the Stonyshire side," said Dinah; "I shouldn't like to set my face towards the countries where they're rich in corn and cattle, and the ground so level and easy to tread; and to turn my back on the hills where the poor people have to live such a hard life, and the men spend their days in the mines away from the sunlight. It's very blessed on a bleak cold day, when the sky is hanging dark over the hill, to feel the love of God in one's soul, and carry it to the lonely, bare, stone houses, where there's nothing else to give comfort."

"Eh!" said Lisbeth, "that's very well for ye to talk, as looks welly like the snowdrop-flowers as ha' lived for days an' days when I'n gathered 'em, wi' nothin' but a drop o' water an' a peep o' daylight; but th' hungry foulks had better leave th' hungry country. It makes less months for the scant cake. But," she went on, looking at Adam, "donna thee talk o' goin' south'ard or north'ard, an' leavin' thy feyther and mother i' the churchyard, an' goin' to a country as they know nothin' on. I'll ne'er rest i' my grave if I donna see thee i' the churchyard of a Sunday."

"Donna fear, mother," said Adam. "If I hadna made up my mind not to go, I should ha' been gone before now."

He had finished his breakfast now, and rose as he was speaking.

"What art goin' to do?" asked Lisbeth. "Set about thy feyther's coffin?"

"No, mother," said Adam; "we're going to take the wood to the village, and have it made there."

"Nay, my lad, nay," Lisbeth burst out in an eager, wailing tone; "thee wotna let nobody make thy feyther's coffin but thysen? Who'd make it so well? An' him as know'd what good work war, an's got a son as is the head o' the village, an' all Treddles'on too, for cleverness."

"Very well, mother, if that's thy wish, I'll make the coffin at home; but I thought thee wouldstna like to hear the work going on."

"An' why shouldna I like't? It's the right thing to be done. An' what's liking got to do wi't? It's choice o' mislikings is all I'n got i' this world. One morsel's as good as another when your mouth's out o' taste. Thee mun set about it now this mornin' fust thing. I wonna ha' nobody to touch the coffin but thee."

Adam's eyes met Seth's, which looked from Dinah to him rather wistfully.

"No, mother," he said, "I'll not consent but Seth shall have a hand in it too, if it's to be done at home. I'll go to the village this forenoon, because Mr. Burge 'ull want to see me, and Seth shall stay at home and begin the coffin. I can come back at noon, and then he can go."

"Nay, nay," persisted Lisbeth, beginning to cry, "I'n set my heart on't as thee shalt ma' thy feyther's coffin. Thee't so stiff an' masterful, thee't ne'er do as thy mother wants thee. Thee wast often angered wi' thy feyther when he war alive; thee must be the better to him now he's gone. He'd ha' thought nothin' on't for Seth to ma's coffin."

"Say no more, Adam, say no more," said Seth, gently, though his voice told that he spoke with some effort; "mother's in the right. I'll go to work, and do thee stay at home."

He passed into the workshop immediately, followed by Adam; while Lisbeth, automatically obeying her old habits, began to put away the breakfast things, as if she did not mean Dinah to take her place any longer. Dinah said nothing, but presently used the opportunity of quietly joining the brothers in the workshop.

They had already got on their aprons and paper caps, and Adam was standing with his left hand on Seth's shoulder, while he pointed with the hammer in his right to some boards which they were looking at. Their backs were turned towards the door by which Dinah entered, and she came in so gently that they were not aware of her presence till they heard her voice saying, "Seth Bede!" Seth started, and they both turned round. Dinah looked as if she did not see Adam, and fixed her eyes on Seth's face, saying with calm kindness —

"I won't say farewell. I shall see you again when you come from work. So as I'm at the farm before dark, it will be quite soon enough."

"Thank you, Dinah; I should like to walk home with you once more. It'll perhaps be the last time."

There was a little tremor in Seth's voice. Dinah put out her hand and said, "You'll have sweet peace in your mind to-day, Seth, for your tenderness and long-suffering towards your aged mother."

She turned round and left the workshop as quickly and quietly as she had entered it. Adam had been observing her closely all the while, but she had not looked at him. As soon as she was gone, he said —

"I don't wonder at thee for loving her, Seth. She's got a face like a lily."

Seth's soul rushed to his eyes and lips: he had never yet confessed his secret to Adam, but now he felt a delicious sense of disburthenment, as he answered —

"Ay, Addy, I do love her — too much, I doubt. But she doesna love me, lad, only as one child o' God loves another. She'll never love any man as a husband — that's my belief."

"Nay, lad, there's no telling; thee mustna lose heart. She's made out o' stuff with a finer grain than most o' the women; I can see that clear enough. But if sho's better than they are in other things, I canna think she'll fall short of 'em in loving."

No more was said. Seth set out to the village, and Adam began his work on the coffin.

"God help the lad, and me too," he thought, as he lifted the board. "We're like enough to find life a tough job — hard work inside and out. It's a strange thing to think of a man as can lift a chair with his teeth, and walk fifty mile on end, trembling and turning hot and cold at only a look from one woman out of all the rest i' the world. It's a mystery we can give no account of; but no more we can of the sprouting o' the seed, for that matter."

## CHAPTER XII.

## IN THE WOOD.

THAT same Thursday morning, as Arthur Donnithorne was moving about in his dressing-room seeing his well-looking British person reflected in the old-fashioned mirrors, and stared at, from a dingy olive-green piece of tapestry, by Pharaoh's daughter and her maidens, who ought to have been minding the infant Moses, he was holding a discussion with himself, which, by the time his valet was tying the black silk sling over his shoulder, had issued in a distinct practical resolution.

"I mean to go to Eagledale and fish for a week or so," he said aloud. "I shall take you with me, Pym, and set off this morning; so be ready by half-past eleven."

The low whistle, which had assisted him in arriving at this resolution, here broke out into his londest ringing tenor, and the corridor, as he hurried along it, echoed to his favorite song from the "Beggar's Opera," "When the heart of a man is oppressed with care." Not an heroic strain; nevertheless Arthur felt himself very heroic as he strode towards the stables to give his orders about the horses. His own approbation was necessary to him, and it was not an approbation to be enjoyed quite gratuitously; it must be won by a fair amount of merit. He had never yet forfeited that approbation, and he had considerable reliance on his own virtues. No young man could confess his faults more candidly; candor was one of his favorite virtues; and how can a man's candor be seen in all its lustre unless he has a few failings to talk of? But he had an agreeable confidence that his faults were all of a generous kind — impetuous, warm-blooded, leonine; never crawling, crafty, reptilian. It was not possible for Arthur Donnithorne to do anything mean, dastardly, or cruel. "No! I'm a devil of a fellow for getting myself into a hobble, but I always take care the load shall fall on my own shoulders." Unhappily there is no inherent poetical justice in hobbles, and they will sometimes obstinately refuse to inflict their worst consequences on the prime offender, in spite of his

loudly-expressed wish. It was entirely owing to this deficiency in the scheme of things that Arthur had ever brought any one into trouble besides himself. He was nothing, if not good-natured; and all his pictures of the future, when he should come into the estate, were made up of a prosperous, contented tenantry, adoring their landlord, who would be the model of an English gentleman — mansion in first rate order, all elegance and high taste — jolly housekeeping, finest stud in Loamshire — purse open to all public objects — in short, everything as different as possible from what was now associated with the name of Donnithorne. And one of the first good actions he would perform in that future should be to increase Irwine's income for the vicarage of Hayslope, so that he might keep a carriage for his mother and sisters. His hearty affection for the Rector dated from the age of frocks and trousers. It was an affection partly filial, partly fraternal; — fraternal enough to make him like Irwine's company better than that of most younger men, and filial enough to make him shrink strongly from incurring Irwine's disapprobation.

You perceive that Arthur Donnithorne was "a good fellow" — all his college friends thought him such: he couldn't bear to see any one uncomfortable; he would have been sorry even in his angriest moods for any harm to happen to his grandfather; and his aunt Lydia herself had the benefit of that soft-heartedness which he bore towards the whole sex. Whether he would have self-mastery enough to be always as harmless and purely beneficent as his good-nature led him to desire, was a question that no one had yet decided against him: he was but twenty-one, you remember; and we don't inquire too closely into character in the case of a handsome generous young fellow, who will have property enough to support numerous peccadilloes — who, if he should unfortunately break a man's legs in his rash driving, will be able to pension him handsomely; or if he should happen to spoil a woman's existence for her, will make it up to her with expensive *bon-bons*, packed up and directed by his own hand. It would be ridiculous to be prying and analytic in such cases, as if one were inquiring into the character of a confidential clerk. We use round, general, gentlemanly epithets about a young man of birth and fortune; and ladies, with that fine intuition which is the distinguishing attribute of their sex, see at once that he is "nice." The chances are that he will go through life without scandalizing any one; a sea-worthy vessel that no one would refuse to insure. Ships, certainly, are liable to casual-

ties, which sometimes make terribly evident some flaw in their construction, that would never have been discoverable in smooth water; and many a "good fellow," through a disastrous combination of circumstances, has undergone a like betrayal.

But we have no fair ground for entertaining unfavorable auguries concerning Arthur Donnithorne, who this morning proves himself capable of a prudent resolution founded on conscience. One thing is clear: Nature has taken care that he shall never go far astray with perfect comfort and satisfaction to himself; he will never get beyond that border-land of sin, where he will be perpetually harassed by assaults from the other side of the boundary. He will never be a courtier of Vice, and wear her orders in his button-hole.

It was about ten o'clock, and the sun was shining brilliantly; everything was looking lovelier for the yesterday's rain. It is a pleasant thing on such a morning to walk along the well-rolled gravel on one's way to the stables, meditating an excursion. But the scent of the stables, which, in a natural state of things, ought to be among the soothing influences of a man's life, always brought with it some irritation to Arthur. There was no having his own way in the stables; everything was managed in the stingiest fashion. His grandfather persisted in retaining as head groom an old dolt whom no sort of lever could move out of his old habits, and who was allowed to hire a succession of raw Loamshire lads as his subordinates, one of whom had lately tested a new pair of shears by clipping an oblong patch on Arthur's bay mare. This state of things is naturally inbittering; one can put up with annoyances in the house, but to have the stable made a scene of vexation and disgust, is a point beyond what human flesh and blood can be expected to endure long together without danger of misanthropy.

Old John's wooden, deep-wrinkled face was the first object that met Arthur's eyes as he entered the stable-yard, and it quite poisoned for him the bark of the two blood-hounds that kept watch there. He could never speak quite patiently to the old blockhead.

"You must have Meg saddled for me and brought to the door at half-past eleven, and I shall want Rattler saddled for Pym at the same time. Do you hear?"

"Yes, I hear, I hear, Cap'n," said old John, very deliberately, following the young master into the stable. John considered a young master as the natural enemy of an old

servant, and young people in general as a poor contrivance for carrying on the world.

Arthur went in for the sake of patting Meg, declining as far as possible to see anything in the stables, lest he should lose his temper before breakfast. The pretty creature was in one of the inner stables, and turned her mild head as her master came beside her. Little Trot, a tiny spaniel, her inseparable companion in the stable, was comfortably curled up on her back.

"Well, Meg, my pretty girl," said Arthur, patting her neck, "we'll have a glorious canter this morning."

"Nay, your honor, I donna see as that can be," said John.

"Not be? Why not?"

"Why, she's got lamed."

"Lamed, confound you! what do you mean?"

"Why, th' lad took her too close to Dalton's hosses, an' one on 'em flung out at her, an' she's got her shank bruised o' the near fore-leg."

The judicious historian abstains from narrating precisely what ensued. You understand that there was a great deal of strong language, mingled with soothing "who-ho's" while the leg was examined; that John stood up with quite as much emotion as if he had been a cunningly-carved crab-tree walking-stick, and that Arthur Donnithorne presently re-passed the iron gates of the pleasure-ground without singing as he went.

He considered himself thoroughly disappointed and annoyed. There was not another mount in the stable for himself and his servant besides Meg and Rattler. It was vexatious; just when he wanted to get out of the way for a week or two. It seemed culpable in Providence to allow such a combination of circumstances. To be shut up at the Chase with a broken arm, when every other fellow in his regiment was enjoying himself at Windsor — shut up with his grandfather, who had the same sort of affection for him as for his parchment deeds! And to be disgusted at every turn with the management of the house and the estate! In such circumstances a man necessarily gets in an ill humor, and works off the irritation by some excess or other. "Salkeld would have drunk a bottle of port every day," he muttered to himself; "but I'm not well seasoned enough for that. Well, since I can't go to Eagledale, I'll have a gallop on Rattler to Norburne this morning, and lunch with Gawaine."

Behind this explicit resolution there lay an implicit one. If he lunched with Gawaine and lingered chatting, he should not reach the Chase again till nearly five, when Hetty would be safe out of his sight in the housekeeper's room; and when she set out to go home, it would be his lazy time after dinner, so he should keep out of her way altogether. There really would have been no harm in being kind to the little thing, and it was worth dancing with a dozen ball-room belles only to look at Hetty for half an hour. But perhaps he had better not take any more notice of her; it might put notions into her head, as Irwine had hinted; though Arthur, for his part, thought girls were not by any means so soft and easily bruised; indeed, he had generally found them twice as cool and cunning as he was himself. As for any real harm in Hetty's case, it was out of the question: Arthur Donnithorne accepted his own bond for himself with perfect confidence.

So the twelve o'clock sun saw him galloping towards Norburne; and by good fortune Halsell Common lay in his road, and gave him some fine leaps for Rattler. Nothing like "taking" a few bushes and ditches for exorcising a demon; and it is really astonishing that the Centaurs, with their immense advantages in this way, have left so bad a reputation in history.

After this, you will perhaps be surprised to hear, that although Gawaine was at home, the hand of the dial in the courtyard had scarcely cleared the last stroke of three, when Arthur returned through the entrance-gates, got down from the panting Rattler, and went into the house to take a hasty luncheon. But I believe there have been men since his day who have ridden a long way to avoid a rencontre, and then galloped hastily back lest they should miss it. It is the favorite stratagem of our passions to sham a retreat, and to turn sharp round upon us at the moment we have made up our minds that the day is our own.

"The Cap'n's been ridin' the devil's own pace," said Dalton the coachman, whose person stood out in high relief as he smoked his pipe against the stable wall, when John brought up Rattler.

"An' I wish he'd get the devil to do's grooming for'n," growled John.

"Ay; he'd hev a deal haimabler groom nor what he has now," observed Dalton; and the joke appeared to him so good, that, being left alone upon the scene, he continued at intervals to take his pipe from his mouth in order to wink at



an imaginary audience, and shake luxuriously with a silent, ventral laughter; mentally rehearsing the dialogue from the beginning, that he might recite it with effect in the servants' hall.

When Arthur went up to his dressing-room again after luncheon, it was inevitable that the debate he had had with himself there earlier in the day should flash across his mind; but it was impossible for him now to dwell on the remembrance — impossible to recall the feelings and reflections which had been decisive with him then, any more than to recall the peculiar scent of the air that had freshened him when he first opened his window. The desire to see Hetty had rushed back like an ill-stemmed current; he was amazed himself at the force with which this trivial fancy seemed to grasp him; he was even rather tremulous as he brushed his hair — pooh! it was riding in that break-neck way. It was because he had made a serious affair of an idle matter, by thinking of it as if it were of any consequence. He would amuse himself by seeing Hetty to-day, and get rid of the whole thing from his mind. It was all Irwine's fault. "If Irwine had said nothing, I shouldn't have thought half so much of Hetty as of Meg's lameness." However, it was just the sort of day for lolling in the Hermitage, and he would go and finish Dr. Moore's *Zeluco* there before dinner. The Hermitage stood in Fir-tree Grove — the way Hetty was sure to come in walking from the Hall Farm. So nothing could be simpler and more natural: meeting Hetty was a mere circumstance of his walk, not its object.

Arthur's shadow flitted rather faster among the sturdy oaks of the Chase than might have been expected from the shadow of a tired man on a warm afternoon, and it was still scarcely four o'clock when he stood before the tall narrow gate leading into the delicious labyrinthine wood which skirted one side of the Chase, and which was called Fir-tree Grove, not because the firs were many, but because they were few. It was a wood of beeches and limes, with here and there a light, silver-stemmed birch — just the sort of wood most haunted by the nymphs: you see their white sunlit limbs gleaming athwart the boughs, or peeping from behind the smooth-sweeping outline of a tall lime; you hear their soft liquid laughter — but if you look with a too curious sacrilegious eye, they vanish behind the silvery beeches, they make you believe that their voice was only a running brooklet, perhaps they metamorphose themselves into a tawny squirrel that scampers

away and mocks you from the topmost bough. It was not a grove with measured grass or rolled gravel for you to tread upon, but with narrow, hollow-shaped, earthy paths, edged with faint dashes of delicate moss—paths which look as if they were made by the free-will of the trees and underwood, moving reverently aside to look at the tall queen of the white-footed nymphs.

It was along the broadest of these paths that Arthur Donniethorne passed, under an avenue of limes and beeches. It was a still afternoon—the golden light was lingering languidly among the upper boughs, only glancing down here and there on the purple pathway and its edge of faintly-sprinkled moss: an afternoon in which destiny disguises her cold awful face behind a hazy radiant veil, encloses us in warm downy wings, and poisons us with violet-scented breath. Arthur strolled along carelessly, with a book under his arm, but not looking on the ground as meditative men are apt to do; his eyes *would* fix themselves on the distant bend in the road round which a little figure must surely appear before long. Ah! there she comes: first a bright patch of color, like a tropic bird among the boughs, then a tripping figure, with a round hat on, and a small basket under her arm; then a deep-blushing, almost frightened, but bright-smiling girl, making her courtesy with a fluttered yet happy glance, as Arthur came up to her. If Arthur had had time to think at all, he would have thought it strange that he should feel fluttered too, be conscious of blushing too—in fact, look and feel as foolish as if he had been taken by surprise instead of meeting just what he expected. Poor things! It was a pity they were not in that golden age of childhood when they would have stood face to face, eying each other with timid liking, then given each other a little butterfly kiss, and toddled off to play together. Arthur would have gone home to his silk-curtained cot, and Hetty to her home-spun pillow, and both would have slept without dreams, and to-morrow would have been a life hardly conscious of a yesterday.

Arthur turned round and walked by Hetty's side without giving a reason. They were alone together for the first time. What an overpowering presence that first privacy is! He actually dared not look at this little butter-maker for the first minute or two. As for Hetty, her feet rested on a clond, and she was borne along by warm zephyrs; she had forgotten her rose-colored ribbons; she was no more conscious of her limbs than if her childish soul had passed into a water-lily, resting

on a liquid bed, and warmed by the midsummer sunbeams. It may seem a contradiction, but Arthur gathered a certain carelessness and confidence from his timidity: it was an entirely different state of mind from what he had expected in such a meeting with Hetty; and full as he was of vague feeling, there was room, in those moments of silence, for the thought that his previous debates and scruples were needless.

"You are quite right to choose this way of coming to the Chase," he said at last, looking down at Hetty, "it is so much prettier as well as shorter than coming by either of the lodges."

"Yes, sir," Hetty answered, with a tremulous, almost whispering voice. She didn't know one bit how to speak to a gentleman like Mr. Arthur, and her very vanity made her more coy of speech.

"Do you come every week to see Mrs. Pomfret?"

"Yes, sir, every Thursday, only when she's got to go out with Miss Donnithorne."

"And she's teaching you something, is she?"

"Yes, sir, the lace-mending as she learnt abroad, and the stocking-mending—it looks just like the stocking, you can't tell it's been mended; and she teaches me cutting-out too."

"What! are you going to be a lady's-maid?"

"I should like to be one very much indeed." Hetty spoke more audibly now, but still rather tremulously; she thought, perhaps she seemed as stupid to Captain Donnithorne as Luke Britton did to her.

"I suppose Mrs. Pomfret always expects you at this time?"

"She expects me at four o'clock. I'm rather late to-day, because my aunt couldn't spare me; but the regular time is four, because that gives us time before Miss Donnithorne's bell rings."

"Ah, then, I must not keep you now, else I should like to show you the Hermitage. Did you ever see it?"

"No, sir."

"This is the walk where we turn up to it. But we must not go now. I'll show it you some other time, if you'd like to see it."

"Yes, please, sir."

"Do you always come back this way in the evening, or are you afraid to come so lonely a road?"

"Oh no, sir, it's never late; I always set out by eight o'clock, and it's so light now in the evening. My aunt would be angry with me if I didn't get home before nine."

"Perhaps Craig, the gardener, comes to take care of you?"

A deep blush overspread Hetty's face and neck. "I'm sure he doesn't; I'm sure he never did; I wouldn't let him; I don't like him," she said hastily, and the tears of vexation had come so fast, that before she had done speaking a bright drop rolled down her hot cheek. Then she felt ashamed to death that she was crying, and for one long instant her happiness was all gone. But in the next she felt an arm steal round her, and a gentle voice said —

"Why, Hetty, what makes you cry? I didn't mean to vex you. I wouldn't vex you for the world, you little blossom. Come, don't cry; look at me, else I shall think you won't forgive me."

Arthur had laid his hand on the soft arm that was nearest to him, and was stooping towards Hetty with a look of coaxing entreaty. Hetty lifted her long dewy lashes, and met the eyes that were bent towards her with a sweet, timid, beseeching look. What a space of time those three moments were, while their eyes met and his arm touched her! Love is such a simple thing when we have only one-and-twenty summers and a sweet girl of seventeen trembles under our glance, as if she were a bud first opening her heart with wondering rapture to the morning. Such young unfurrowed souls roll to meet each other like two velvet peaches that touch softly and are at rest; they mingle as easily as two brooklets that ask for nothing but to intertwine themselves and ripple with ever-interlacing curves in the leafiest hiding-places. While Arthur gazed into Hetty's dark beseeching eyes, it made no difference to him what sort of English she spoke; and even if hoops and powder had been in fashion, he would very likely not have been sensible just then that Hetty wanted those signs of high breeding.

But they started asunder with beating hearts: something had fallen on the ground with a rattling noise; it was Hetty's basket; all her little workwoman's matters were scattered on the path, some of them showing a capability of rolling to great lengths. There was much to be done in picking up, and not a word was spoken; but when Arthur hung the basket over her arm again, the poor child felt a strange difference in his look and manner. He just pressed her hand, and said, with a look and tone that were almost chilling to her —

"I have been hindering you: I must not keep you any longer now. You will be expected at the house. Good-by."

Without waiting for her to speak, he turned away from

her and hurried back towards the road that led to the Hermitage, leaving Hetty to pursue her way in a strange dream, that seemed to have begun in bewildering delight, and was now passing into contrarieties and sadness. Would he meet her again as she came home? Why had he spoken almost as if he were displeased with her? and then run away so suddenly? She cried, hardly knowing why.

Arthur too was very uneasy, but his feelings were lit up for him by a more distinct consciousness. He hurried to the Hermitage, which stood in the heart of the wood, unlocked the door with a hasty wrench, slammed it after him, pitched *Zeluco* into the most distant corner, and, thrusting his right hand into his pocket, first walked four or five times up and down the scanty length of the little room, and then seated himself on the ottoman in an uncomfortable stiff way, as we often do when we wish not to abandon ourselves to feeling.

He was getting in love with Hetty — that was quite plain. He was ready to pitch everything else — no matter where — for the sake of surrendering himself to this delicious feeling which had just disclosed itself. It was no use blinking the fact now — they would get too fond of each other, if he went on taking notice of her — and what would come of it? He should have to go away in a few weeks, and the poor little thing would be miserable. He *must not* see her alone again; he must keep out of her way. What a fool he was for coming back from Gawaine's!

He got up and threw open the windows, to let in the soft breath of the afternoon, and the healthy scent of the firs that made a belt round the Hermitage. The soft air did not help his resolutions, as he leaned out and looked into the leafy distance. But he considered his resolution sufficiently fixed: there was no need to debate with himself any longer. He had made up his mind not to meet Hetty again; and now he might give himself up to thinking how immensely agreeable it would be if circumstances were different — how pleasant it would have been to meet her this evening as she came back, and put his arm round her again and look into her sweet face. He wondered if the dear little thing were thinking of him too — twenty to one she was. How beautiful her eyes were with the tear on their lashes! He would like to satisfy his soul for a day with looking at them, and he *must* see her again: — he must see her, simply to remove any false impression from her mind about his manner to her just now. He would behave in a quiet, kind way to her — just to prevent her from going

home with her head full of wrong fancies. Yes, that would be the best thing to do after all.

It was a long while — more than an hour — before Arthur had brought his meditations to this point; but once arrived there, he could stay no longer at the Hermitage. The time must be filled up with movement until he should see Hetty again. And it was already late enough to go and dress for dinner, for his grandfather's dinner-hour was six.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### EVENING IN THE WOOD.

It happened that Mrs. Pomfret had had a slight quarrel with Mrs. Best, the housekeeper, on this Thursday morning — a fact which had two consequences highly convenient to Hetty. It caused Mrs. Pomfret to have tea sent up to her own room, and it inspired that exemplary lady's-maid with so lively a recollection of former passages in Mrs. Best's conduct, and of dialogues in which Mrs. Best had decidedly the inferiority as an interlocutor with Mrs. Pomfret, that Hetty required no more presence of mind than was demanded for using her needle, and throwing in an occasional "yes" or "no." She would have wanted to put on her hat earlier than usual; only she had told Captain Donnithorne that she usually set out about eight o'clock, and if he *should* go to the Grove again expecting to see her, and she should be gone! Would he come? Her little butterfly-soul fluttered incessantly between memory and dubious expectation. At last the minute-hand of the old-fashioned brazen-faced timepiece was on the last quarter to eight, and there was every reason for its being time to get ready for departure. Even Mrs. Pomfret's preoccupied mind did not prevent her from noticing what looked like a new flush of beauty in the little thing as she tied on her hat before the looking-glass.

"That child gets prettier and prettier every day, I do believe," was her inward comment. "The more's the pity. She'll get neither a place nor a husband any the sooner for it. Sober well-to-do men don't like such pretty wives. When I was a girl, I was more admired than if I had been so very

pretty. However, she's reason to be grateful to me for teaching her something to get her bread with, better than farmhouse work. They always told me I was good-natured — and that's the truth, and to my hurt too, else there's them in this house that wouldn't be here now to lord it over me in the housekeeper's room."

Hetty walked hastily across the short space of pleasure-ground which she had to traverse, dreading to meet Mr. Craig, to whom she could hardly have spoken civilly. How relieved she was when she had got safely under the oaks and among the fern of the Chase! Even then she was as ready to be startled as the deer that leaped away at her approach. She thought nothing of the evening light that lay gently in the grassy alleys between the fern, and made the beauty of their living green more visible than it had been in the overpowering flood of noon: she thought of nothing that was present. She only saw something that was possible: Mr. Arthur Donnithorne coming to meet her again along the Fir-tree Grove. That was the foreground of Hetty's picture; behind it lay a bright hazy something — days that were not to be as the other days of her life had been. It was as if she had been wooed by a river-god, who might any time take her to his wondrous halls below a watery heaven. There was no knowing what would come, since this strange entrancing delight had come. If a chest full of lace and satin and jewels had been sent her from some unknown source, how could she but have thought that her whole lot was going to change, and that to-morrow some still more bewildering joy would befall her? Hetty had never read a novel; if she had ever seen one, I think the words would have been too hard for her; how then could she find a shape for her expectations? They were as formless as the sweet languid odors of the garden at the Chase, which had floated past her as she walked by the gate.

She is at another gate now — that leading into Fir-tree Grove. She enters the wood, where it is already twilight, and at every step she takes, the fear at her heart becomes colder. If he should not come! Oh how dreary it was — the thought of going out at the other end of the wood, into the unsheltered road, without having seen him. She reaches the first turning towards the Hermitage, walking slowly — he is not there. She hates the leveret that runs across the path: she hates everything that is not what she longs for. She walks on, happy whenever she is coming to a bend in the road, for perhaps he is behind it. No. She is beginning to cry: her heart

has swelled so, the tears stand in her eyes; she gives one great sob, while the corners of her mouth quiver, and the tears roll down.

She doesn't know that there is another turning to the Hermitage, that she is close against it, and that Arthur Donniethorne is only a few yards from her, full of one thought, and a thought of which she only is the object. He is going to see Hetty again: that is the longing which has been growing through the last three hours to a feverish thirst. Not, of course, to speak in the caressing way into which he had unguardedly fallen before dinner, but to set things right with her by a kindness which would have the air of friendly civility, and prevent her from running away with wrong notions about their mutual relation.

If Hetty had known he was there, she would not have cried; and it would have been better, for then Arthur would perhaps have behaved as wisely as he had intended. As it was, she started when he appeared at the end of the side-alley, and looked up at him with two great drops rolling down her cheeks. What else could he do but speak to her in a soft, soothing tone, as if she were a bright-eyed spaniel with a thorn in her foot?

"Has something frightened you, Hetty? Have you seen anything in the wood? Don't be frightened—I'll take care of you now."

Hetty was blushing so, she didn't know whether she was happy or miserable. To be crying again—what did gentlemen think of girls who cried in that way? She felt unable even to say "no," but could only look away from him, and wipe the tears from her cheek. Not before a great drop had fallen on her rose-colored strings: she knew that quite well.

"Come, be cheerful again. Smile at me, and tell me what's the matter. Come, tell me."

Hetty turned her head towards him, whispered, "I thought you wouldn't come," and slowly got courage to lift her eyes to him. That look was too much: he must have had eyes of Egyptian granite not to look too lovingly in return.

"You little frightened bird! little tearful rose! silly pet! You won't cry again, now I'm with you, will you?"

Ah, he doesn't know in the least what he is saying. This is not what he meant to say. His arm is stealing round the waist again, it is tightening its clasp; he is bending his face nearer and nearer to the round cheek, his lips are meeting those pouting child-lips, and for a long moment time has



vanished. He may be a shepherd in Arcadia for aught he knows, he may be the first youth kissing the first maiden, he may be Eros himself, sipping the lips of Psyche—it is all one.

There was no speaking for minutes after. They walked along with beating hearts till they came within sight of the gate at the end of the wood. Then they looked at each other, not quite as they had looked before, for in their eyes there was the memory of a kiss.

But already something bitter had begun to mingle itself with the fountain of sweets: already Arthur was uncomfortable. He took his arm from Hetty's waist, and said,—

"Here we are, almost at the end of the Grove. I wonder how late it is," he added, pulling out his watch. "Twenty minutes past eight—but my watch is too fast. However, I'd better not go any further now. Trot along quickly with your little feet, and get home safely. Good-by."

He took her hand, and looked at her half sadly, half with a constrained smile. Hetty's eyes seemed to beseech him not to go away yet; but he patted her cheek and said "Good-by" again. She was obliged to turn away from him, and go on.

As for Arthur, he rushed back through the wood, as if he wanted to put a wide space between himself and Hetty. He would not go to the Hermitage again; he remembered how he had debated with himself there before dinner, and it had all come to nothing—worse than nothing. He walked right on into the Chase, glad to get out of the Grove, which surely was haunted by his evil genius. Those beeches and smooth limes—there was something enervating in the very sight of them; but the strong knotted old oaks had no bending languor in them—the sight of them would give a man some energy. Arthur lost himself among the narrow openings in the fern, winding about without seeking any issue, till the twilight deepened almost to night under the great boughs, and the hare looked black as it darted across his path.

He was feeling much more strongly than he had done in the morning: it was as if his horse had wheeled round from a leap, and dared to dispute his mastery. He was dissatisfied with himself, irritated, mortified. He no sooner fixed his mind on the probable consequences of giving way to the emotions which had stolen over him to-day—of continuing to notice Hetty, of allowing himself any opportunity for such slight caresses as he had been betrayed into already—than he

refused to believe such a future possible for himself. To flirt with Hetty was a very different affair from flirting with a pretty girl of his own station: that was understood to be an amusement on both sides; or, if it became serious, there was no obstacle to marriage. But this little thing would be spoken ill of directly, if she happened to be seen walking with him; and then those excellent people, the Poysers, to whom a good name was as precious as if they had the best blood in the land in their veins — he should hate himself if he made a scandal of that sort, on the estate that was to be his own some day, and among tenants by whom he liked, above all, to be respected. He could no more believe that he should so fall in his own esteem than that he should break both his legs and go on crutches all the rest of his life. He couldn't imagine himself in that position; it was too odious, too unlike him.

And even if no one knew anything about it, they might get too fond of each other, and then there could be nothing but the misery of parting, after all. No gentleman, out of a ballad, could marry a farmer's niece. There must be an end to the whole thing at once. It was too foolish.

And yet he had been so determined this morning, before he went to Gawaine's; and while he was there something had taken hold of him and made him gallop back. It seemed, he couldn't quite depend on his own resolution, as he had thought he could: he almost wished his arm would get painful again, and then he should think of nothing but the comfort it would be to get rid of the pain. There was no knowing what impulse might seize him to-morrow, in this confounded place, where there was nothing to occupy him imperiously through the livelong day. What could he do to secure himself from any more of this folly?

There was but one resource. He would go and tell Irwine — tell him everything. The mere act of telling it would make it seem trivial; the temptation would vanish, as the charm of fond words vanishes when one repeats them to the indifferent. In every way it would help him, to tell Irwine. He would ride to Broxton Rectory the first thing after breakfast to-morrow.

Arthur had no sooner come to this determination than he began to think which of the paths would lead him home, and made as short a walk thither as he could. He felt sure he should sleep now; he had had enough to tire him, and there was no more need for him to think.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE RETURN HOME.

WHILE that parting in the wood was happening, there was a parting in the cottage too, and Lisbeth had stood with Adam at the door, straining her aged eyes to get the last glimpse of Seth and Dinah, as they mounted the opposite slope.

"Eh, I'm loath to see the last on her," she said to Adam, as they turned into the house again. "I'd ha' been willin' t' ha' her about me till I died and went to lie by my old man. She'd make it easier dyin'—she spakes so gentle an' moves about so still. I could be fast sure that pictur was drawed for her i' thy new Bible—th' angel a-sittin' on the big stone by the grave. Eh, I wouldna mind ha'in' a daughter like that; but nobody ne'er marries them as is good for aught."

"Well, mother, I hope thee *wilt* have her for a daughter; for Seth's got a liking for her, and I hope she'll get a liking for Seth in time."

"Where's th' use o' talkin' a-that'n? She caresna for Seth. She's goin' away twenty mile aff. How's she to get a likin' for him, I'd like to know? No more nor the cake 'ull come wi'out the leaven. Thy figurin' books might ha' tould thee better nor that, I should think, else thee mightst as well read the commin print, as Seth allays does."

"Nay, mother," said Adam, laughing, "the figures tell us a fine deal, and we couldn't go far without 'em, but they don't tell us about folks's feelings. It's a nicer job to calculate *them*. But Seth's as good-hearted a lad as ever handled a tool, and plenty o' sense, and good-looking too; and he's got the same way o' thinking as Dinah. He deserves to win her, though there's no denying she's a rare bit o' workmanship. You don't see such women turned off the wheel every day."

"Eh, thee't allays stick up for thy brother. Thee'st been just the same, e'er sin' ye war little uns together. Thee wart allays for halving iverything wi' him. But what's Seth got to do with marryin', as is on'y three-an'-twenty? He'd more need to learn an' lay by sixpence. An' as for him desarving her—she's two 'ear older nor Seth: she's pretty near as old

as thee. But that's the way; folks mun allays choose by contraries, as if they must be sorted like the pork—a bit o' good meat wi' a bit o' offal."

To the feminine mind in some of its moods, all things that might be, receive a temporary charm from comparison with what is; and since Adam did not want to marry Dinah himself, Lisbeth felt rather peevish on that score—as peevish as she would have been if he *had* wanted to marry her, and so shut himself out from Mary Burge and the partnership as effectually as by marrying Hetty.

It was more than half-past eight when Adam and his mother were talking in this way, so that when, about ten minutes later, Hetty reached the turning of the lane that led to the farmyard gate, she saw Dinah and Seth approaching it from the opposite direction, and waited for them to come up to her. They, too, like Hetty, had lingered a little in their walk, for Dinah was trying to speak words of comfort and strength to Seth in these parting moments. But when they saw Hetty, they paused and shook hands: Seth turned homewards, and Dinah came on alone.

"Seth Bede would have come and spoken to you, my dear," she said, as she reached Hetty, "but he's very full of trouble to-night."

Hetty answered with a dimpled smile, as if she did not quite know what had been said; and it made a strange contrast to see that sparkling self-engrossed loveliness looked at by Dinah's calm pitying face, with its open glance which told that her heart lived in no cherished secrets of its own, but in feelings which it longed to share with all the world. Hetty liked Dinah as well as she had ever liked any woman; how was it possible to feel otherwise towards one who always put in a kind word for her when her aunt was finding fault, and who was always ready to take Totty off her hands—little tiresome Totty, that was made such a pet of by every one, and that Hetty could see no interest in at all? Dinah had never said anything disapproving or reproachful to Hetty during her whole visit to the Hall Farm; she had talked to her a great deal in a serious way, but Hetty didn't mind that much, for she never listened: whatever Dinah might say, she almost always stroked Hetty's cheek after it, and wanted to do some mending for her. Dinah was a riddle to her; Hetty looked at her much in the same way as one might imagine a little perching bird that could only flutter from bough to bough, to look at the swoop of the swallow or the mounting of the lark;

but she did not care to solve such riddles, any more than she cared to know what was meant by the pictures in the "Pilgrim's Progress," or in the old folio Bible that Marty and Tommy always plagued her about on a Sunday.

Dinah took her hand now and drew it under her own arm.

"You look very happy to-night, dear child," she said. "I shall think of you often when I'm at Snowfield, and see your face before me as it is now. It's a strange thing — sometimes when I'm quite alone, sitting in my room with my eyes closed, or walking over the hills, the people I've seen and known, if it's only been for a few days, are brought before me, and I hear their voices and see them look and move almost plainer than I ever did when they were really with me so as I could touch them. And then my heart is drawn out towards them, and I feel their lot as if it was my own, and I take comfort in spreading it before the Lord and resting in His love, on their behalf as well as my own. And so I feel sure you will come before me."

She paused a moment, but Hetty said nothing.

"It has been a very precious time to me," Dinah went on, "last night and to-day — seeing two such good sons as Adam and Seth Bede. They are so tender and thoughtful for their aged mother. And she has been telling me what Adam has done, for these many years, to help his father and his brother; it's wonderful what a spirit of wisdom and knowledge he has, and how he's ready to use it all in behalf of them that are feeble. And I'm sure he has a loving spirit too. I've noticed it often among my own people round Snowfield, that the strong, skilful men are often the gentlest to the women and children; and it's pretty to see 'em carrying the little babies as if they were no heavier than little birds. And the babies always seem to like the strong arm best. I feel sure it would be so with Adam Bede. Don't you think so, Hetty?"

"Yes," said Hetty, abstractedly, for her mind had been all the while in the wood, and she would have found it difficult to say what she was assenting to. Dinah saw she was not inclined to talk, but there would not have been time to say much more, for they were now at the yard-gate.

The still twilight, with its dying western red, and its few faint struggling stars, rested on the farmyard, where there was not a sound to be heard but the stamping of the cart-horses in the stable. It was about twenty minutes after sun-set when the fowls were all gone to roost, and the bull-dog lay stretched on the straw outside his kennel, with the black-and-

tan terrier by his side, when the falling-to of the gate disturbed them, and set them barking, like good officials, before they had any distinct knowledge of the reason.

The barking had its effect in the house, for, as Dinah and Hetty approached, the doorway was filled by a portly figure, with a ruddy black-eyed face, which bore in it the possibility of looking extremely acute, and occasionally contemptuous, on market-days, but had now a predominant after-supper expression of hearty good-nature. It is well known that great scholars who have shown the most pitiless acerbity in their criticism of other men's scholarship, have yet been of a relenting and indulgent temper in private life; and I have heard of a learned man meekly rocking the twins in the cradle with his left hand, while with his right he inflicted the most lacerating sarcasms on an opponent who had betrayed a brutal ignorance of Hebrew. Weaknesses and errors must be forgiven — alas! they are not alien to us — but the man who takes the wrong side on the momentous subject of the Hebrew points must be treated as the enemy of his race. There was the same sort of antithetic mixture in Martin Poyser: he was of so excellent a disposition that he had been kinder and more respectful than ever to his old father since he had made a deed of gift of all his property, and no man judged his neighbors more charitably on all personal matters; but for a farmer, like Luke Britton, for example, whose fallows were not well cleaned, who didn't know the rudiments of hedging and ditching, and showed but a small share of judgment in the purchase of winter stock, Martin Poyser was as hard and implacable as the north-east wind. Luke Britton could not make a remark, even on the weather, but Martin Poyser detected in it a taint of that unsoundness and general ignorance which was palpable in all his farming operations. He hated to see the fellow lift the pewter pint to his mouth in the bar of the Royal George on market-day, and the mere sight of him on the other side of the road brought a severe and critical expression into his black eyes, as different as possible from the fatherly glance he bent on his two nieces as they approached the door. Mr. Poyser had smoked his evening pipe, and now held his hands in his pockets, as the only resource of a man who continues to sit up after the day's business is done.

"Why, lasses, ye're rather late to-night," he said, when they reached the little gate leading into the causeway. "The mother's begun to fidget about you, an' she's got the little un ill. An' how did you leave the old woman Bede, Dinah? Is

she much down about the old man? He'd been but a poor bargain to her this five year."

"She's been greatly distressed for the loss of him," said Dinah; "but she's seemed more comforted to-day. Her son Adam's been at home all day, working at his father's coffin, and she loves to have him at home. She's been talking about him to me almost all the day. She has a loving heart, though she's sorely given to fret and be fearful. I wish she had a surer trust to comfort her in her old age."

"Adam's sure enough," said Mr. Poyser, misunderstanding Dinah's wish. "There's no fear but he'll yield well i' the threshing. He's not one o' them as is all straw and no grain. I'll be bond for him any day, as he'll be a good son to the last. Did he say he'd be coming to see us soon? But come in, come in," he added, making way for them; "I hadn't need keep y' out any longer."

The tall buildings round the yard shut out a good deal of the sky, but the large window let in abundant light to show every corner of the house-place.

Mrs. Poyser, seated in the rocking-chair, which had been brought out of the "right-hand parlor," was trying to soothe Totty to sleep. But Totty was not disposed to sleep; and when her consins entered, she raised herself up, and showed a pair of flushed cheeks, which looked fatter than ever now they were defined by the edge of her linen night-cap.

In the large wicker-bottomed arm-chair in the left-hand chimney-nook sat old Martin Poyser, a hale but shrunken and bleached image of his portly black-haired son—his head hanging forward a little, and his elbows pushed backwards so as to allow the whole of his fore-arm to rest on the arm of the chair. His blue handkerchief was spread over his knees, as was usual indoors, when it was not hanging over his head; and he sat watching what went forward with the quiet *outward* glance of healthy old age, which, disengaged from any interest in an inward drama, spies out pins upon the floor, follows one's minutest motions with an unexpectant purposeless tenacity, watches the flickering of the flame or the sun-gleams on the wall, counts the quarries on the floor, watches even the hand of the clock, and pleases itself with detecting a rhythm in the tick.

"What a time o' night this is to come home, Hetty!" said Mrs. Poyser. "Look at the clock, do; why, it's going on for half-past nine, and I've sent the gells to bed this half-hour, and late enough too; when they've got to get up at half after

four, and the mowers' bottles to fill, and the baking; and here's this blessed child wi' the fever for what I know, and as wakeful as if it was dinner-time, and nobody to help me to give her the physic but your uncle, and fine work there's been, and half of it spilt on her night-gown—it's well if she's swallowed more nor 'ull make her worse instead o' better. But folks as have no mind to be o' use have allays the luck to be out o' the road when there's anything to be done."

"I did set out before eight, aunt," said Hetty, in a pettish tone, with a slight toss of her head. "But this clock's so much before the clock at the Chase, there's no telling what time it'll be when I get here."

"What! you'd be wanting the clock set by gentle-folk's time, would you? an' sit up burnin' candle, an' lie a-bed wi' the sun a-bakin' you like a cowcumber i' the frame? The clock hasn't been put forrard for the first time to-day, I reckon."

The fact was, Hetty had really forgotten the difference of the clocks when she told Captain Donnithorne that she set out at eight, and this, with her lingering pace, had made her nearly half an hour later than usual. But here her aunt's attention was diverted from this tender subject by Totty, who, perceiving at length that the arrival of her cousins was not likely to bring anything satisfactory to her in particular, began to cry, "Munny, munny," in an explosive manner.

"Well, then, my pet, mother's got her, mother won't leave her; Totty be a good dilling, and go to sleep now," said Mrs. Poyser, leaning back and rocking the chair, while she tried to make Totty nestle against her. But Totty only cried louder, and said "Don't yock!" So the mother, with that wondrous patience which love gives to the quickest temperament, sat up again, and pressed her cheek against the linen night-cap and kissed it, and forgot to scold Hetty any longer.

"Come, Hetty," said Martin Poyser, in a conciliatory tone, "go and get your supper i' the pantry, as the things are all put away; an' then you can come and take the little un while your aunt undresses herself, for she won't lie down in bed without her mother. An' I reckon *you* could eat a bit, Dinah, for they don't keep much of a house down there."

"No, thank you, uncle," said Dinah; "I ate a good meal before I came away, for Mrs. Bede would make a kettle-cake for me."

"I don't want any supper," said Hetty, taking off her hat. "I can hold Totty now, if aunt wants me."



"Why, what nonsense that is to talk!" said Mrs. Poyser, "Do you think you can live wi'out eatin', an' nourish your inside wi' stickin' red ribbons on your head? Go an' get your supper this minute, child; there's a nice bit o' cold pudding i' the safe—just what you're fond of."

Hetty complied silently by going towards the pantry, and Mrs. Poyser went on speaking to Dinah.

"Sit down, my dear, and look as if you knowed what it was to make yourself a bit comfortable i' the world. I warrant the old woman was glad to see you, since you stayed so long."

"She seemed to like having me there at last; but her sons say she doesn't like young women about her commonly; and I thought just at first she was almost angry with me for going."

"Eh, it's a poor look-out when th' ould folks doesna like the young mns," said old Martin, bending his head down lower, and seeming to trace the pattern of the quarries with his eye.

"Ay, it's ill living in a hen-roost for them as doesn't like fleas," said Mrs. Poyser. "We've all had our turn at bein' young, I reckon, be't good luck or ill."

"But she must learn to 'commode herself to young women," said Mr. Poyser, "for it isn't to be counted on as Adam and Seth 'ull keep bachelors for the next ten year to please their mother. That 'ud be unreasonable. It isn't right for old nor young nayther to make a bargain all o' their own side. What's good for one's good all round i' the long-run. I'm no friend to young fellows a-marrying afore they know the difference atween a crab an' a apple; but they may wait o'er long."

"To be sure," said Mrs. Poyser; "if you go past your dinner-time, there'll be little relish o' your meat. You turn it o'er an' o'er wi' your fork, an' don't eat it after all. You find faut wi' your meat, an' the faut's all i' your own stomach."

Hetty now came back from the pantry, and said, "I can take Totty now, aunt, if you like."

"Come, Rachel," said Mr. Poyser, as his wife seemed to hesitate, seeing that Totty was at last nestling quietly, "thee'dst better let Hetty carry her up-stairs, while thee tak'st thy things off. Thee't tired. It's time thee wast in bed. Thee't bring on the pain in thy side again."

"Well, she may hold her if the child 'ull go to her," said Mrs. Poyser.

Hetty went close to the rocking-chair, and stood without

her usual smile, and without any attempt to entice Totty, simply waiting for her aunt to give the child into her hands.

"Wilt go to cousin Hetty, my dilling, while mother gets ready to go to bed? Then Totty shall go into mother's bed, and sleep there all night."

Before her mother had done speaking, Totty had given her answer in an unmistakable manner, by knitting her brow, setting her tiny teeth against her under-lip, and leaning forward to slap Hetty on the arm with her utmost force. Then, without speaking, she nestled to her mother again.

"Hey, hey," said Mr. Poyser, while Hetty stood without moving, "not go to cousin Hetty? That's like a babby: Totty's a little woman, an' not a babby."

"It's no use trying to persuade her," said Mrs. Poyser. "She allays takes against Hetty when she isn't well. Happen she'll go to Dinah."

Dinah, having taken off her bonnet and shawl, had hitherto kept quietly seated in the background, not liking to thrust herself between Hetty and what was considered Hetty's proper work. But now she came forward, and, putting out her arms, said, "Come, Totty, come and let Dinah carry her up-stairs along with mother: poor, poor mother! she's so tired—she wants to go to bed."

Totty turned her face towards Dinah, and looked at her an instant, then lifted herself up, put out her little arms, and let Dinah lift her from her mother's lap. Hetty turned away without any sign of ill-humor, and, taking her hat from the table, stood waiting with an air of indifference, to see if she should be told to do anything else.

"You may make the door fast now, Poyser; Aliek's been come in this long while," said Mrs. Poyser, rising with an appearance of relief from her low chair. "Get me the matches down, Hetty, for I must have the rushlight burning i' my room. Come, father."

The heavy wooden bolts began to roll in the house doors, and old Martin prepared to move, by gathering up his blue handkerchief, and reaching his bright knobbed walnut-tree stick from the corner. Mrs. Poyser then led the way out of the kitchen, followed by the grandfather, and Dinah with Totty in her arms—all going to bed by twilight, like the birds. Mrs. Poyser, on her way, peeped into the room where her two boys lay, just to see their ruddy round cheeks on the pillow, and to hear for a moment their light regular breathing.

"Come, Hetty, get to bed," said Mr. Poyser, in a soothing

tone, as he himself turned to go up-stairs. "You didna mean to be late, I'll be bound, but your aunt's been worritted to-day. Good-night, my wench, good-night."

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## CHAPTER XV.

## THE TWO BED-CHAMBERS.

HETTY and Dinah both slept in the second story, in rooms adjoining each other, meagrely-furnished rooms, with no blinds to shut out the light, which was now beginning to gather new strength from the rising of the moon—more than enough strength to enable Hetty to move about and undress with perfect comfort. She could see quite well the pegs in the old painted linen-press on which she hung her hat and gown; she could see the head of every pin on her red cloth pin-cushion; she could see a reflection of herself in the old-fashioned looking-glass, quite as distinct as was needful, considering that she had only to brush her hair and put on her night-cap. A queer old looking-glass! Hetty got into an ill-temper with it almost every time she dressed. It had been considered a handsome glass in its day, and had probably been bought into the Poyser family a quarter of a century before, at a sale of genteel household furniture. Even now an auctioneer could say something for it: it had a great deal of tarnished gilding about it; it had a firm mahogany base, well supplied with drawers, which opened with a decided jerk, and sent the contents leaping out from the farthest corners, without giving you the trouble of reaching them; above all, it had a brass candle-socket on each side, which would give it an aristocratic air to the very last. But Hetty objected to it because it had numerous dim blotches sprinkled over the mirror, which no rubbing would remove, and because, instead of swinging backwards and forwards, it was fixed in an upright position, so that she could only get one good view of her head and neck, and that was to be had only by sitting down on a low chair before her dressing-table. And the dressing-table was no dressing-table at all, but a small old chest of drawers, the most awkward thing in the world to sit down before, for the big brass handles quite hurt her knees, and she couldn't get near the glass at all comfortably.

But devout worshippers never allow inconveniences to prevent them from performing their religious rites, and Hetty this evening was more bent on her peculiar form of worship than usual.

Having taken off her gown and white kerchief, she drew a key from the large pocket that hung outside her petticoat, and, unlocking one of the lower drawers in the chest, reached from it two short bits of wax candle—secretly bought at Treddleston—and stuck them in the two brass sockets. Then she drew forth a bundle of matches, and lighted the candles; and last of all, a small red-framed shilling looking-glass, without blotches. It was into this small glass that she chose to look first after seating herself. She looked into it, smiling, and turning her head on one side, for a minute, then laid it down and took out her brush and comb from an upper drawer. She was going to let down her hair, and make herself look like that picture of a lady in Miss Lydia Donnithorne's dressing-room. It was soon done, and the dark hyacinthine curves fell on her neck. It was not heavy, massive, merely rippling hair, but soft and silken, running at every opportunity into delicate rings. But she pushed it all backward to look like the picture, and form a dark curtain, throwing into relief her round white neck. Then she put down her brush and comb, and looked at herself, folding her arms before her, still like the picture. Even the old mottled glass couldn't help sending back a lovely image, none the less lovely because Hetty's stays were not of white satin—such as I feel sure heroines must generally wear—but of a dark greenish cotton texture.

Oh yes! she was very pretty: Captain Donnithorne thought so. Prettier than anybody about Hayslope—prettier than any of the ladies she had ever seen visiting at the Chase—indeed it seemed fine ladies were rather old and ugly—and prettier than Miss Bacon, the miller's daughter, who was called the beauty of Treddleston. And Hetty looked at herself to-night with quite a different sensation from what she had ever felt before; there was an invisible spectator whose eye rested on her like morning on the flowers. His soft voice was saying over and over again those pretty things she had heard in the wood; his arm was round her, and the delicate rose-scent of his hair was with her still. The vainest woman is never thoroughly conscious of her own beauty till she is loved by the man who sets her own passion vibrating in return.

But Hetty seemed to have made up her mind that something was wanting, for she got up and reached an old black lace scarf out of the linen-press, and a pair of large ear-rings out of the sacred drawer from which she had taken her candles. It was an old, old scarf, full of rents, but it would make a becoming border round her shoulders, and set off the whiteness of her upper arm. And she would take out the little ear-rings she had in her ears — oh, how her aunt had scolded her for having her ears bored! — and put in those large ones: they were but colored glass and gilding; but if you didn't know what they were made of, they looked just as well as what the ladies wore. And so she sat down again, with the large ear-rings in her ears, and the black lace scarf adjusted round her shoulders. She looked down at her arms: no arms could be prettier down to a little way below the elbow — they were white and plump, and dimpled to match her cheeks; but towards the wrist, she thought with vexation that they were coarsened by butter-making and other work that ladies never did.

Captain Donnithorne couldn't like her to go on doing work; he would like to see her in nice clothes, and thin shoes and white stockings, perhaps with silk clocks to them; for he must love her very much — no one else had ever put his arm round her and kissed her in that way. He would want to marry her, and make a lady of her; she could hardly dare to shape the thought — yet how else could it be? Marry her quite secretly, as Mr. James, the Doctor's assistant, married the Doctor's niece, and nobody ever found it out for a long while after, and then it was of no use to be angry. The Doctor had told her aunt all about it in Hetty's hearing. She didn't know how it would be, but it was quite plain the old Squire could never be told anything about it, for Hetty was ready to faint with awe and fright if she came across him at the Chase. He might have been earth-born, for what she knew: it had never entered her mind that he had been young like other men; he had always been the old Squire at whom everybody was frightened. Oh it was impossible to think how it would be! But Captain Donnithorne would know; he was a great gentleman, and could have his way in everything, and could buy everything he liked. And nothing could be as it had been again: perhaps some day she should be a grand lady, and ride in her coach, and dress for dinner in a brocaded silk, with feathers in her hair, and her dress sweeping the ground, like Miss Lydia and Lady Dacey when she saw them

going into the dining-room one evening, as she peeped through the little round window in the lobby; only she should not be old and ugly like Miss Lydia, or all the same thickness like Lady Dacey, but very pretty, with her hair done in a great many different ways and sometimes in a pink dress, and sometimes in a white one — she didn't know which she liked best; and Mary Burge and everybody would perhaps see her going out in her carriage — or rather, they would *hear* of it: it was impossible to imagine these things happening at Hayslope in sight of her aunt. At the thought of all this splendor Hetty got up from her chair, and in doing so caught the little red-framed glass with the edge of her scarf, so that it fell with a bang on the floor; but she was too eagerly occupied with her vision to care about picking it up; and after a momentary start, began to pace with a pigeon-like stateliness backwards and forwards along her room, in her colored stays and colored skirt, and the old black lace scarf round her shoulders, and the great glass ear-rings in her ears.

How pretty the little puss looks in that odd dress! It would be the easiest folly in the world to fall in love with her: there is such a sweet baby-like roundness about her face and figure; the delicate dark rings of hair lie so charmingly about her ears and neck; her great dark eyes with their long eyelashes touch one so strangely, as if an imprisoned frisky sprite looked out of them.

Ah! what a prize the man gets who wins a sweet bride like Hetty! How the men envy him who come to the wedding breakfast, and see her hanging on his arm in her white lace and orange blossoms. The dear, young, round, soft, flexible thing! Her heart must be just as soft, her temper just as free from angles, her character just as pliant. If anything ever goes wrong, it must be the husband's fault there: he can make her what he likes — that is plain. And the lover himself thinks so too: the little darling is so fond of him, her little vanities are so bewitching, he wouldn't consent to her being a bit wiser; those kitten-like glances and movements are just what one wants to make one's hearth a paradise. Every man under such circumstances is conscious of being a great physiognomist. Nature, he knows, has a language of her own, which she uses with strict veracity, and he considers himself an adept in the language. Nature has written out his bride's character for him in those exquisite lines of cheek and lip and chin, in those eyelids delicate as petals, in those long lashes curled like the stamen of a flower, in the dark

liquid depths of those wonderful eyes. How she will dote on her children ! She is almost a child herself, and the little pink round things will hang about her like florets round the central flower ; and the husband will look on, smiling benignly, able, whenever he chooses, to withdraw into the sanctuary of his wisdom, towards which his sweet wife will look reverently, and never lift the curtain. It is a marriage such as they made in the golden age, when the men were all wise and majestic, and the women all lovely and loving.

It was very much in this way that our friend Adam Bede thought about Hetty ; only he put his thoughts into different words. If ever she behaved with cold vanity towards him, he said to himself, it is only because she doesn't love me well enough ; and he was sure that her love, whenever she gave it, would be the most precious thing a man could possess on earth. Before you despise Adam as deficient in penetration, pray ask yourself if you were ever predisposed to believe evil of any pretty woman — if you ever *could*, without hard head-breaking demonstration, believe evil of the *one* supremely pretty woman who has bewitched you. No : people who love downy peaches are apt not to think of the stone, and sometimes jar their teeth terribly against it.

Arthur Donnithorne, too, had the same sort of notion about Hetty, so far as he had thought of her nature at all. He felt sure she was a dear, affectionate, good little thing. The man who awakes the wondering tremulous passion of a young girl always thinks her affectionate ; and if he chances to look forward to future years, probably imagines himself being virtuously tender to her, because the poor thing is so clingingly fond of him. God made these dear women so — and it is a convenient arrangement in case of sickness.

After all, I believe the wisest of us must be beguiled in this way sometimes, and must think both better and worse of people than they deserve. Nature has her language, and she is not untruthful ; but we don't know all the intricacies of her syntax just yet, and in a hasty reading we may happen to extract the very opposite of her real meaning. Long dark eyelashes, now : what can be more exquisite ? I find it impossible not to expect some depth of soul behind a deep gray eye with a long dark eyelash, in spite of an experience which has shown me that they may go along with deceit, speculation, and stupidity. But if, in the reaction of disgust, I have betaken myself to a fishy eye, there has been a surprising similarity of result. One begins to suspect at length that

there is no direct correlation between eyelashes and morals; or else, that the eyelashes express the disposition of the fair one's grandmother, which is on the whole less important to us.

No eyelashes could be more beautiful than Hetty's; and now, while she walks with her pigeon-like stateliness along the room and looks down on her shoulders bordered by the old black lace, the dark fringe shows to perfection on her pink cheek. They are but dim ill-defined pictures that her narrow bit of an imagination can make of the future; but of every picture she is the central figure in fine clothes; Captain Donnithorne is very close to her, putting his arm round her, perhaps kissing her, and everybody else is admiring and envying her — especially Mary Burge, whose new print dress looks very contemptible by the side of Hetty's resplendent toilet. Does any sweet or sad memory mingle with this dream of the future — any loving thought of her second parents — of the children she had helped to tend — of any youthful companion, any pet animal, any relic of her own childhood even? Not one. There are some plants that have hardly any roots: you may tear them from their native nook of rock or wall, and just lay them over your ornamental flower-pot, and they blossom none the worse. Hetty could have cast all her past life behind her, and never cared to be reminded of it again. I think she had no feeling at all towards the old house, and did not like the Jacob's Ladder and the long row of hollyhocks in the garden better than other flowers — perhaps not so well. It was wonderful how little she seemed to care about waiting on her uncle, who had been a good father to her: she hardly ever remembered to reach him his pipe at the right time without being told, unless a visitor happened to be there, who would have a better opportunity of seeing her as she walked across the hearth. Hetty did not understand how anybody could be very fond of middle-aged people. And as for those tiresome children, Marty and Tommy and Totty, they had been the very nuisance of her life — as bad as buzzing insects that will come teasing you on a hot day when you want to be quiet. Marty, the eldest, was a baby when she first came to the farm, for the children born before him had died, and so Hetty had had them all three, one after the other, toddling by her side in the meadow, or playing about her on wet days in the half-empty rooms of the large old house. The boys were out of hand now, but Totty was still a day-long plague, worse than either



of the others had been, because there was more fuss made about her. And there was no end to the making and mending of clothes. Hetty would have been glad to hear that she should never see a child again; they were worse than the nasty little lambs that the shepherd was always bringing in to be taken special care of in lambing time; for the lambs *were* got rid of sooner or later. As for the young chickens and turkeys, Hetty would have hated the very word "hatching," if her aunt had not bribed her to attend to the young poultry by promising her the proceeds of one out of every brood. The round downy chicks peeping out from under their mother's wing never touched Hetty with any pleasure; that was not the sort of prettiness she cared about, but she did care about the prettiness of the new things she would buy for herself at Treddleston fair with the money they fetched. And yet she looked so dimpled, so charming, as she stooped down to put the soaked bread under the hen-coop, that you must have been a very acute personage indeed to suspect her of that hardness. Molly, the housemaid, with a turn-up nose and a protuberant jaw, was really a tender-hearted girl, and, as Mrs. Poyser said, a jewel to look after the poultry; but her stolid face showed nothing of this maternal delight, any more than a brown earthenware pitcher will show the light of the lamp within it.

It is generally a feminine eye that first detects the moral deficiencies hidden under the "dear deceit" of beauty: so it is not surprising that Mrs. Poyser, with her keenness and abundant opportunity for observation, should have formed a tolerably fair estimate of what might be expected from Hetty in the way of feeling, and in moments of indignation she had sometimes spoken with great openness on the subject to her husband.

"She's no better than a peacock, as 'ud strut about on the wall, and spread its tail when the sun shone if all the folks i' the parish was dying: there's nothing seems to give her a turn i' th' inside, not even when we thought Totty had tumbled into the pit. To think o' that dear cherub! And we found her wi' her little shoes stuck i' the mud an' crying fit to break her heart by the far horse-pit. But Hetty never minded it, I could see, though she's been at the nussin' o' the child ever since it was a babby. It's my belief her heart's as hard as a pebble."

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Poyser, "thee mustn't judge Hetty too hard. Them young gells are like the unripe grain; they'll

make good meal by and by, but they're squashy as yet. T' e't see Hetty 'll be all right when she's got a good husband and children of her own."

"I don't want to be hard upo' the gell. She's got cliver fingers of her own, and can be useful enough when she likes, and I should miss her wi' the butter, for she's got a cool hand. An' let be what may, I'd strive to do my part by a niece o' yours, an' *that* I've done: for I've taught her everything as belongs to a house, an' I've told her her duty often enough, though, God knows, I've no breath to spare, an' that catchin' pain comes on dreadful by times. Wi' them three gells in the house I'd need have twice the strength, to keep 'em up to their work. It's like having roast meat at three fires; as soon as you've basted one, another's burnin'."

Hetty stood sufficiently in awe of her aunt to be anxious to conceal from her so much of her vanity as could be hidden without too great a sacrifice. She could not resist spending her money in bits of finery which Mrs. Poyser disapproved; but she would have been ready to die with shame, vexation, and fright, if her aunt had this moment opened the door, and seen her with her bits of candle lighted, and strutting about decked in her scarf and ear-rings. To prevent such a surprise, she always bolted her door, and she had not forgotten to do so to-night. It was well: for there now came a light tap, and Hetty, with a leaping heart, rushed to blow out the candles and throw them into the drawer. She dared not stay to take out her ear-rings, but she threw off her scarf, and let it fall on the floor, before the light tap came again. We shall know how it was that the light tap came, if we leave Hetty for a short time, and return to Dinah, at the moment when she had delivered Totty to her mother's arms, and was come up-stairs to her bedroom, adjoining Hetty's.

Dinah delighted in her bedroom window. Being on the second story of that tall house, it gave her a wide view over the fields. The thickness of the wall formed a broad step about a yard below the window, where she could place her chair. And now the first thing she did on entering her room, was to seat herself in this chair, and look out on the peaceful fields beyond which the large moon was rising, just above the hedgerow elms. She liked the pasture best where the milch cows were lying, and next to that the meadow where the grass was half mown, and lay in silvered sweeping lines. Her heart was very full, for there was to be only one more night on which she would look out on those fields for a long

time to come; but she thought little of leaving the mere scene, for, to her, bleak Snowfield had just as many charms: she thought of all the dear people whom she had learned to care for among these peaceful fields, and who would now have a place in her loving remembrance forever. She thought of the struggles and the weariness that might lie before them in the rest of their life's journey, when she would be away from them, and know nothing of what was befalling them; and the pressure of this thought soon became too strong for her to enjoy the unresponding stillness of the moonlit fields. She closed her eyes, that she might feel more intensely the presence of a Love and Sympathy deeper and more tender than was breathed from the earth and sky. That was often Dinah's mode of praying in solitude. Simply to close her eyes, and to feel herself enclosed by the Divine Presence; then gradually her fears, her yearning anxieties for others, melted away like ice-crystals in a warm ocean. She had sat in this way perfectly still, with her hands crossed on her lap, and the pale light resting on her calm face, for at least ten minutes, when she was startled by a loud sound, apparently of something falling in Hetty's room. But like all sounds that fall on our ears in a state of abstraction, it had no distinct character, but was simply loud and startling, so that she felt uncertain whether she had interpreted it rightly. She rose and listened, but all was quiet afterwards, and she reflected that Hetty might merely have knocked something down in getting into bed. She began slowly to undress; but now, owing to the suggestions of this sound, her thoughts became concentrated on Hetty: that sweet young thing, with life and all its trials before her — the solemn daily duties of the wife and mother — and her mind so unprepared for them all; bent merely on little foolish, selfish pleasures, like a child hugging its toys in the beginning of a long toilsome journey, in which it will have to bear hunger and cold and unsheltered darkness. Dinah felt a double care for Hetty, because she shared Seth's anxious interest in his brother's lot, and she had come to the conclusion that Hetty did not love Adam well enough to marry him. She saw too clearly the absence of any warm, self-devoting love in Hetty's nature, to regard the coldness of her behavior towards Adam as any indication that he was not the man she would like to have for a husband. And this blank in Hetty's nature, instead of exciting Dinah's dislike, only touched her with a deeper pity: the lovely face and form affected her as beauty always affects a pure and tender

mind, free from selfish jealousies: it was an excellent divine gift, that gave a deeper pathos to the need, the sin, the sorrow with which it was mingled, as the canker in a lily-white bud is more grievous to behold than in a common pot-herb.

By the time Dinah had undressed and put on her night-gown, this feeling about Hetty had gathered a painful intensity; her imagination had created a thorny thicket of sin and sorrow, in which she saw the poor thing straggling torn and bleeding, looking with tears for rescue and finding none. It was in this way that Dinah's imagination and sympathy acted and reacted habitually, each heightening the other. She felt a deep longing to go now and pour into Hetty's ear all the words of tender warning and appeal that rushed into her mind. But perhaps Hetty was already asleep. Dinah put her ear to the partition, and heard still some slight noises, which convinced her that Hetty was not yet in bed. Still she hesitated; she was not quite certain of a divine direction; the voice that told her to go to Hetty seemed no stronger than the other voice which said that Hetty was weary, and that going to her now in an unseasonable moment would only tend to close her heart more obstinately. Dinah was not satisfied without a more unmistakable guidance than those inward voices. There was light enough for her, if she opened her Bible, to discern the text sufficiently to know what it would say to her. She knew the physiognomy of every page, and could tell on what book she opened, sometimes on what chapter, without seeing title or number. It was a small thick Bible, worn quite round at the edges. Dinah laid it sideways on the window ledge, where the light was strongest, and then opened it with her forefinger. The first words she looked at were those at the top of the left-hand page: "And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him." That was enough for Dinah; she had opened on that memorable parting at Ephesus, when Paul had felt bound to open his heart in a last exhortation and warning. She hesitated no longer, but, opening her own door gently, went and tapped at Hetty's. We know she had to tap twice, because Hetty had to put out her candles and throw off her black lace scarf; but after the second tap the door was opened immediately. Dinah said, "Will you let me come in, Hetty?" and Hetty, without speaking, for she was confused and vexed, opened the door wider and let her in.

What a strange contrast the two figures made! Visible enough in that mingled twilight and moonlight. Hetty, her

cheeks flushed and her eyes glistening from her imaginary drama, her beautiful neck and arms bare, her hair hanging in a curly tangle down her back, and the baubles in her ears. Dinah, covered with her long white dress, her pale face full of subdued emotion, almost like a lovely corpse into which the soul has returned charged with sublimer secrets and a sublimer love. They were nearly of the same height; Dinah evidently a little the taller as she put her arm round Hetty's waist, and kissed her forehead.

"I knew you were not in bed, my dear," she said, in her sweet clear voice, which was irritating to Hetty, mingling with her own peevish vexation like music with jangling chains, "for I heard you moving; and I longed to speak to you again to-night, for it is the last but one that I shall be here, and we don't know what may happen to-morrow to keep us apart. Shall I sit down with you while you do up your hair?"

"Oh yes," said Hetty, hastily turning round and reaching the second chair in the room, glad that Dinah looked as if she did not notice her ear-rings.

Dinah sat down, and Hetty began to brush together her hair before twisting it up, doing it with that air of excessive indifference which belongs to confused self-consciousness. But the expression of Dinah's eyes gradually relieved her; they seemed unobservant of all details.

"Dear Hetty," she said, "it has been borne in upon my mind to-night that you may some day be in trouble—trouble is appointed for us all here below, and there comes a time when we need more comfort and help than the things of this life can give. I want to tell you that if ever you are in trouble, and need a friend that will always feel for you and love you, you have got that friend in Dinah Morris at Showfield; and if you come to her, or send for her, she'll never forget this night and the words she is speaking to you now. Will you remember it, Hetty?"

"Yes," said Hetty, rather frightened. "But why should you think I shall be in trouble? Do you know of anything?"

Hetty had seated herself as she tied on her cap, and now Dinah leaned forwards and took her hands as she answered—

"Because, dear, trouble comes to us all in this life: we set our hearts on things which it isn't God's will for us to have, and then we go sorrowing; the people we love are taken from us, and we can joy in nothing because they are not

with us; sickness comes, and we faint under the burden of our feeble bodies; we go astray and do wrong, and bring ourselves into trouble with our fellow-men. There is no man or woman born into this world to whom some of these trials do not fall, and so I feel that some of them must happen to you; and I desire for you, that while you are young you should seek for strength from your Heavenly Father, that you may have a support which will not fail you in the evil day."

Dinah paused and released Hetty's hands that she might not hinder her. Hetty sat quite still; she felt no response within herself to Dinah's anxious affection; but Dinah's words, uttered with solemn pathetic distinctness, affected her with a chill fear. Her flush had died away almost to paleness; she had the timidity of a luxurious pleasure-seeking nature, which shrinks from the hint of pain. Dinah saw the effect, and her tender anxious pleading became the more earnest, till Hetty, full of a vague fear that something evil was sometime to befall her, began to cry.

It is our habit to say that while the lower nature can never understand the higher, the higher nature commands a complete view of the lower. But I think the higher nature has to learn this comprehension, as we learn the art of vision, by a good deal of hard experience, often with bruises and gashes incurred in taking things up by the wrong end, and fancying our space wider than it is. Dinah had never seen Hetty affected in this way before, and, with her usual benignant hopefulness, she trusted it was the stirring of a divine impulse. She kissed the sobbing thing, and began to cry with her for grateful joy. But Hetty was simply in that excitable state of mind in which there is no calculating what turn the feelings may take from one moment to another, and for the first time she became irritated under Dinah's caress. She pushed her away impatiently, and said, with a childish sobbing voice —

"Don't talk to me so, Dinah. Why do you come to frighten me? I've never done anything to you. Why can't you let me be?"

Poor Dinah felt a pang. She was too wise to persist, and only said mildly, "Yes, my dear, you're tired; I won't hinder you any longer. Make haste and get into bed. Good-night."

She went out of the room almost as quietly and quickly as if she had been a ghost; but once by the side of her own bed,

cheeks flushed and her eyes glistening from her imaginary drama, her beautiful neck and arms bare, her hair hanging in a curly tangle down her back, and the baubles in her ears. Dinah, covered with her long white dress, her pale face full of subdued emotion, almost like a lovely corpse into which the soul has returned charged with sublimer secrets and a sublimer love. They were nearly of the same height; Dinah evidently a little the taller as she put her arm round Hetty's waist, and kissed her forehead.

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she threw herself on her knees, and poured out in deep silence all the passionate pity that filled her heart.

As for Hetty, she was soon in the wood again — her waking dreams being merged in a sleeping life scarcely more fragmentary and confused.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### LINKS.

ARTHUR DONNITHORNE, you remember, is under an engagement with himself to go and see Mr. Irwine this Friday morning, and he is awake and dressing so early, that he determines to go before breakfast, instead of after. The Rector, he knows, breakfasts alone at half-past nine, the ladies of the family having a different breakfast-hour; Arthur will have an early ride over the hill and breakfast with him. One can say everything best over a meal.

The progress of civilization has made a breakfast or a dinner an easy and cheerful substitute for more troublesome and disagreeable ceremonies. We take a less gloomy view of our errors now our father confessor listens to us over his egg and coffee. We are more distinctly conscious that rude penances are out of the question for gentlemen in an enlightened age, and that mortal sin is not incompatible with an appetite for muffins. An assault on our pockets, which in more barbarous times would have been made in the brusque form of a pistol-shot, is quite a well-bred and smiling procedure now it has become a request for a loan thrown in as an easy parenthesis between the second and third glasses of claret.

Still, there was this advantage in the old rigid forms, that they committed you to the fulfilment of a resolution by some outward deed: when you have put your mouth to one end of a hole in a stone wall, and are aware that there is an expectant ear at the other end, you are more likely to say what you came out with the intention of saying, than if you were seated with your legs in an easy attitude under the mahogany, with a companion who will have no reason to be surprised if you have nothing particular to say.

However, Arthur Donnithorne, as he winds among the pleasant lanes on horseback in the morning sunshine, has a

sincere determination to open his heart to the Rector, and the swirling sound of the scythe as he passes by the meadow is all the pleasanter to him because of this honest purpose. He is glad to see the promise of settled weather now, for getting in the hay, about which the farmers have been fearful; and there is something so healthful in the sharing of a joy that is general and not merely personal, that this thought about the hay-harvest reacts on his state of mind, and makes his resolution seem an easier matter. A man about town might perhaps consider that these influences were not to be felt out of a child's story-book; but when you are among the fields and hedgerows, it is impossible to maintain a consistent superiority to simple natural pleasures.

Arthur had passed the village of Hayslope, and was approaching the Broxton side of the hill, when, at a turning in the road, he saw a figure about a hundred yards before him which it was impossible to mistake for any one else than Adam Bede, even if there had been no gray, tailless shopherdog at his heels. He was striding along at his usual rapid pace; and Arthur pushed on his horse to overtake him, for he retained too much of his boyish feeling for Adam to miss an opportunity of chatting with him. I will not say that his love for that good fellow did not owe some of its force to the love of patronage: our friend Arthur liked to do everything that was handsome, and to have his handsome deeds recognized.

Adam looked round as he heard the quickening clatter of the horse's heels, and waited for the horseman, lifting his paper cap from his head with a bright smile of recognition. Next to his own brother Seth, Adam would have done more for Arthur Donnithorne than for any other young man in the world. There was hardly anything he would not rather have lost than the two-foot ruler which he always carried in his pocket; it was Arthur's present, bought with his pocket-money when he was a fair-haired lad of eleven, and when he had profited so well by Adam's lessons in carpentering and turning, as to embarrass every female in the house with gifts of superfluous thread-reels and round boxes. Adam had quite a pride in the little squire in those early days, and the feeling had only become slightly modified as the fair-haired lad had grown into the whiskered young man. Adam, I confess, was very susceptible to the influence of rank, and quite ready to give an extra amount of respect to every one who had more advantages than himself, not being a philosopher,

or a proletaire with democratic ideas, but simply a stout-limbed clever carpenter with a large fund of reverence in his nature, which inclined him to admit all established claims unless he saw very clear grounds for questioning them. He had no theories about setting the world to rights, but he saw there was a great deal of damage done by building with ill-seasoned timber — by ignorant men in fine clothes making plans for outhouses and workshops and the like, without knowing the bearings of things — by slovenly joiners' work, and by hasty contracts that could never be fulfilled without ruining somebody; and he resolved, for his part, to set his face against such doings. On these points he would have maintained his opinion against the largest landed proprietor in Loamshire or Stonyshire either; but he felt that beyond these it would be better for him to defer to people who were more knowing than himself. He saw as plainly as possible how ill the woods on the estate were managed, and the shameful state of the farm-buildings; and if old Squire Donnithorne had asked him the effect of this mismanagement, he would have spoken his opinion without flinching, but the impulse to a respectful demeanor towards a "gentleman" would have been strong within him all the while. The word "gentleman" had a spell for Adam, and, as he often said, he "couldn't abide a fellow who thought he made himself fine by being coxy to's betters." I must remind you again that Adam had the blood of the peasant in his veins, and that since he was in his prime half a century ago, you must expect some of his characteristics to be obsolete.

Towards the young squire this instinctive reverence of Adam's was assisted by boyish memories and personal regard; so you may imagine that he thought far more of Arthur's good qualities, and attached far more value to very slight actions of his, than if they had been the qualities and actions of a common workman like himself. He felt sure it would be a fine day for everybody about Hayslope when the young squire came into the estate — such a generous open-hearted disposition as he had, and an "uncommon" notion about improvements and repairs, considering he was only just coming of age. Thus there was both respect and affection in the smile with which he raised his paper cap as Arthur Donnithorne rode up.

"Well, Adam, how are you?" said Arthur, holding out his hand. He never shook hands with any of the farmers, and Adam felt the honor keenly. "I could swear to your

back a long way off. It's just the same back, only broader, as when you used to carry me on it. Do you remember?"

"Ay, sir, I remember. It 'ud be a poor look-out if folks didn't remember what they did and said when they were lads. We should think no more about old friends than we do about new uns, then."

"You're going to Broxton, I suppose?" said Arthur, putting his horse on at a slow pace while Adam walked by his side. "Are you going to the Rectory?"

"No, sir, I'm going to see about Bradwell's barn. They're afraid of the roof pushing the walls out; and I'm going to see what can be done with it before we send the stuff and the workmen."

"Why, Burge trusts almost everything to you now, Adam, doesn't he? I should think he will make you his partner soon. He will, if he's wiso."

"Nay, sir, I don't see as he'd be much the better off for that. A foreman, if he's got a conscience, and delights in his work, will do his business as well as if he was a partner. I wouldn't give a penny for a man as 'ud drive a nail in slack because he didn't get extra pay for it."

"I know that, Adam; I know you work for him as well as if you were working for yourself. But you would have more power than you have now, and could turn the business to better account perhaps. The old man must give up his business some time, and he has no son; I suppose he'll want a son-in-law who can take to it. But he has rather grasping fingers of his own, I fancy: I dare say he wants a man who can put some money into the business. If I were not as poor as a rat, I would gladly invest some money in that way, for the sake of having you settled on the estate. I'm sure I should profit by it in the end. And perhaps I shall be better off in a year or two. I shall have a larger allowance now I'm of age; and when I've paid off a debt or two, I shall be able to look about me."

"You're very good to say so, sir, and I'm not unthankful. But" — Adam continued, in a decided tone — "I shouldn't like to make any offers to Mr. Burge, or t' have any made for me. I see no clear road to a partnership. If he should ever want to dispose of the business, that 'ud be a different matter. I should be glad of some money at a fair interest then, for I feel sure I could pay it off in time."

"Very well, Adam," said Arthur, remembering what Mr. Irwine had said about a probable hitch in the love-making

between Adam and Mary Burge, "we'll say no more about it at present. When is your father to be buried?"

"On Sunday, sir; Mr. Irwine's coming earlier on purpose. I shall be glad when it's over, for I think my mother 'ull perhaps get easier then. It cuts one sadly to see the grief of old people; they've no way o' working it off; and the new spring brings no new shoots out on the withered tree."

"Ah, you've had a good deal of trouble and vexation in your life, Adam. I don't think you've ever been harebrained and light-hearted, like other youngsters. You've always had some care on your mind."

"Why, yes, sir; but that's nothing to make a fuss about. If we're men, and have men's feelings, I reckon we must have men's troubles. We can't be like the birds, as fly from their nest as soon as they've got their wings, and never know their kin when they see 'em, and get a fresh lot every year. I've had enough to be thankful for: I've allays had health and strength and brains to give me a delight in my work; and I count it a great thing as I've had Bartle Massey's night-school to go to. He's helped me to knowledge I could never ha' got by myself."

"What a rare fellow you are, Adam!" said Arthur, after a pause, in which he had looked musingly at the big fellow walking by his side. "I could hit out better than most men at Oxford, and yet I believe you would knock me into next week if I wero to have a battle with you."

"God forbid I should ever do that, sir," said Adam, looking round at Arthur, and smiling. "I used to fight for fun; but I've never done that since I was the cause o' poor Gil Tranter being laid up for a fortnight. I'll never fight any man again, only when he behaves like a scoundrel. If you get hold of a chap that's got no shame nor conscience to stop him, you must try what you can do by bunging his eyes up."

Arthur did not laugh, for he was preoccupied with some thought that made him say presently —

"I should think now, Adam, you never have any struggles within yourself. I fancy you would master a wish that you had made up your mind it was not quite right to indulge, as easily as you would knock down a drunken fellow who was quarrelsome with you. I mean, you are never shilly-shally, first making up your mind that you won't do a thing, and then doing it after all?"

"Well," said Adam, slowly, after a moment's hesitation — "no, I don't remember ever being see-saw in that way, when

I'd made my mind up, as you say, that a thing was wrong. It takes the taste out o' my mouth for things, when I know I should have a heavy conscience after 'em. I've seen pretty clear, ever since I could cast up a sum, as you can never do what's wrong without breeding sin and trouble more than you can ever see. It's like a bit o' bad workmanship — you never see th' end o' the mischief it'll do. And it's a poor look-out to come into the world to make your fellow-creatures worse off instead o' better. But there's a difference between the things folks call wrong. I'm not for making a sin of every little fool's trick, or bit o' nonsense anybody may be let into, like some o' them dissenters. And a man may have two minds whether it isn't worth while to get a bruise or two for the sake of a bit o' fun. But it isn't my way to be see-saw about anything: I think my fault lies th' other way. When I've said a thing, if it's only to myself, it's hard for me to go back."

"Yes, that's just what I expected of you," said Arthur. "You've got an iron will, as well as an iron arm. But however strong a man's resolution may be, it costs him something to carry it out, now and then. We may determine not to gather any cherries, and keep our hands sturdily in our pockets, but we can't prevent our mouths from watering."

"That's true, sir; but there's nothing like settling with ourselves as there's a deal we must do without i' this life. It's no use looking on life as if it was Treddles'on fair, where folks only go to see shows and get fairings. If we do, we shall find it different. But where's the use o' me talking to you, sir? You know better than I do."

"I'm not so sure of that, Adam. You've had four or five years of experience more than I've had, and I think your life has been a better school to you than college has been to me."

"Why, sir, you seem to think o' college something like what Bartle Massey does. He says college mostly makes people like bladders — just good for nothing but t' hold the stuff as is poured into 'em. But he's got a tongue like a sharp blade, Bartle has: it never touches anything but it cuts. Here's the turning, sir. I must bid you good-morning, as you're going to the Rectory."

"Good-by, Adam, good-by."

Arthur gave his horse to the groom at the Rectory gate, and walked along the gravel towards the door which opened on the garden. He knew that the Rector always breakfasted in his study, and the study lay on the left hand of this door,

opposite the dining-room. It was a small low room, belonging to the old part of the house — dark with the sombre covers of the books that lined the walls; yet it looked very cheery this morning as Arthur reached the open window. For the morning sun fell aslant on the great glass globe with goldfish in it, which stood on a scagliola pillar in front of the ready-spread bachelor breakfast-table, and by the side of this breakfast-table was a group which would have made any room enticing. In the crimson damask easy-chair sat Mr. Irwine, with that radiant freshness which he always had when he came from his morning toilet; his finely-formed plump white hand was playing along Juno's brown curly back; and close to Juno's tail, which was wagging with calm matronly pleasure, the two brown pups were rolling over each other in an ecstatic duet of worrying noises. On a cushion a little removed sat Pug, with the air of a maiden lady, who looked on these familiarities as animal weaknesses, which she made as little show as possible of observing. On the table, at Mr. Irwine's elbow, lay the first volume of the Foulis *Æschylus*, which Arthur knew well by sight; and the silver coffee-pot, which Carroll was bringing in, sent forth a fragrant steam which completed the delights of a bachelor breakfast.

"Hallo Arthur, that's a good fellow! You're just in time," said Mr. Irwine, as Arthur paused and stepped in over the low window-sill. "Carroll, we shall want more coffee and eggs, and haven't you got some cold fowl for us to eat with that ham? Why, this is like old days, Arthur; you haven't been to breakfast with me these five years."

"It was a tempting morning for a ride before breakfast," said Arthur; "and I used to like breakfasting with you so when I was reading with you. My grandfather is always a few degrees colder at breakfast than at any other hour in the day. I think his morning bath doesn't agree with him."

Arthur was anxious not to imply that he came with any special purpose. He had no sooner found himself in Mr. Irwine's presence than the confidence which he had thought quite easy before, suddenly appeared the most difficult thing in the world to him, and at the very moment of shaking hands he saw his purpose in quite a new light. How could he make Irwine understand his position unless he told him those little scenes in the wood; and how could he tell them without looking like a fool? And then his weakness in coming back from Gawaine's, and doing the very opposite of what he intended!

Irwine would think him a shilly-shally fellow ever after. However, it must come out in an unpremeditated way; the conversation might lead up to it.

"I like breakfast-time better than any other moment in the day," said Mr. Irwine. "No dust has settled on one's mind then, and it presents a clear mirror to the rays of things. I always have a favorite book by me at breakfast, and I enjoy the bits I pick up then so much, that regularly every morning it seems to me as if I should certainly become studious again. But presently Dent brings up a poor fellow who has killed a hare, and when I've got through my 'justicing,' as Carroll calls it, I'm inclined for a ride round the glebe, and on my way back I meet with the master of the workhouse, who has got a long story of a mutinous pauper to tell me; and so the day goes on, and I'm always the same lazy fellow before evening sets in. Besides, one wants the stimulus of sympathy, and I have never had that since poor D'Oyley left Treddleston. If you had stuck to your books well, you rascal, I should have had a pleasanter prospect before me. But scholarship doesn't run in your family blood."

"No indeed. It's well if I can remember a little inapplicable Latin to adorn my maiden speech in Parliament six or seven years hence. '*Cras ingens iterabimus æquor*,' and a few shreds of that sort, will perhaps stick to me, and I shall arrange my opinions so as to introduce them. But I don't think a knowledge of the classics is a pressing want to a country gentleman; as far as I can see, he'd much better have a knowledge of manures. I've been reading your friend Arthur Young's books lately, and there's nothing I should like better than to carry out some of his ideas in putting the farmers on a better management of their land; and, as he says, making what was a wild country, all of the same dark hue, bright and variegated with corn and cattle. My grandfather will never let me have any power while he lives; but there's nothing I should like better than to undertake the Stonyshire side of the estate—it's in a dismal condition—and set improvements on foot, and gallop about from one place to another and overlook them. I should like to know all the laborers, and see them touching their hats to me with a look of good-will."

"Bravo, Arthur! a man who has no feeling for the classics couldn't make a better apology for coming into the world than by increasing the quantity of food to maintain scholars—and rectors who appreciate scholars. And whenever you



enter on your career of model landlord may I be there to see. You'll want a portly rector to complete the picture, and take his tithe of all the respect and honor you get by your hard work. Only don't set your heart too strongly on the good-will you are to get in consequence. I'm not sure that men are the fondest of those who try to be useful to them. You know Gawaine has got the curses of the whole neighborhood upon him about that enclosure. You must make it quite clear to your mind which you are most bent upon, old boy—popularity or usefulness—else you may happen to miss both."

"Oh! Gawaine is harsh in his manners; he doesn't make himself personally agreeable to his tenants. I don't believe there's anything you can't prevail on people to do with kindness. For my part, I couldn't live in a neighborhood where I was not respected and beloved; and it's very pleasant to go among the tenants here, they seem all so well inclined to me. I suppose it seems only the other day to them since I was a little lad, riding on a pony about as big as a sheep. And if fair allowances were made to them, and their buildings attended to, one could persuade them to farm on a better plan, stupid as they are."

"Then mind you fall in love in the right place, and don't get a wife who will drain your purse and make you niggardly in spite of yourself. My mother and I have a little discussion about you sometimes: she says, 'I'll never risk a single prophecy on Arthur until I see the woman he falls in love with.' She thinks your lady-love will rule you as the moon rules the tides. But I feel bound to stand up for you, as my pupil, you know; and I maintain that you're not of that watery quality. So mind you don't disgrace my judgment."

Arthur winced under this speech, for keen old Mrs. Irwine's opinion about him had the disagreeable effect of a sinister omen. This, to be sure, was only another reason for persevering in his intention, and getting an additional security against himself. Nevertheless, at this point in the conversation, he was conscious of increased disinclination to tell his story about Hetty. He was of an impressible nature, and lived a great deal in other people's opinions and feelings concerning himself; and the mere fact that he was in the presence of an intimate friend, who had not the slightest notion that he had had any such serious internal struggle as he came to confide, rather shook his own belief in the seriousness of the struggle. It was not after all, a thing to make a fuss about; and what could

Irvine do for him that he could not do for himself? He would go to Eagledale in spite of Meg's lameness — go on Rattler, and let Pym follow as well as he could on the old hack. That was his thought as he sugared his coffee; but the next minute, as he was lifting the cup to his lips, he remembered how thoroughly he had made up his mind last night to tell Irvine. No! he would not be vacillating again — he *would* do what he had meant to do, this time. So it would be well not to let the personal tone of the conversation altogether drop. If they went to quite indifferent topics, his difficulty would be heightened. It had required no noticeable pause for this rush and rebound of feeling, before he answered —

"But I think it is hardly an argument against a man's general strength of character, that he should be apt to be mastered by love. A fine constitution doesn't insure one against small-pox or any other of those inevitable diseases. A man may be very firm in other matters, and yet be under a sort of witchery from a woman."

"Yes; but there's this difference between love and small-pox, or bewitchment either — that if you detect the disease at an early stage, and try change of air, there is every chance of complete escape without any further development of symptoms. And there are certain alternative doses which a man may administer to himself by keeping unpleasant consequences before his mind: this gives you a sort of smoked glass through which you may look at the resplendent fair one and discern her true outline; though I'm afraid, by the by, the smoked glass is apt to be missing just at the moment it is most wanted. I dare say, now, even a man fortified with a knowledge of the classics might be lured into an imprudent marriage, in spite of the warning given him by the chorus in the Prometheus."

The smile that flitted across Arthur's face was a faint one, and instead of following Mr. Irvine's playful lead, he said, quite seriously — "Yes, that's the worst of it. It's a desperately vexatious thing, that after all one's reflections and quiet determinations, we should be ruled by moods that one can't calculate on beforehand. I don't think a man ought to be blamed so much if he is betrayed into doing things in that way, in spite of his resolutions."

"Ah, but the moods lie in his nature, my boy, just as much as his reflections did, and more. A man can never do anything at variance with his own nature. He carries within him the germ of his most exceptional action; and if we wise people

make eminent fools of ourselves on any particular occasion, we must endure the legitimate conclusion that we carry a few grains of folly to our ounce of wisdom."

"Well, but one may be betrayed into doing things by a combination of circumstances, which one might never have done otherwise."

"Why, yes, a man can't very well steal a bank-note unless the bank-note lies within convenient reach; but he won't make us think him an honest man because he begins to howl at the bank-note for falling in his way."

"But surely you don't think a man who struggles against a temptation into which he falls at last, as bad as the man who never struggles at all?"

"No, certainly; I pity him in proportion to his struggles, for they foreshadow the inward suffering which is the worst form of Nemesis. Consequences are un pitying. Our deeds carry their terrible consequences, quite apart from any fluctuations that went before — consequences that are hardly ever confined to ourselves. And it is best to fix our minds on that certainty, instead of considering what may be the elements of excuse for us. But I never knew you so inclined for moral discussion, Arthur? Is it some danger of your own that you are considering in this philosophical, general way?"

In asking this question, Mr. Irwine pushed his plate away, threw himself back in his chair, and looked straight at Arthur. He really suspected that Arthur wanted to tell him something, and thought of smoothing the way for him by this direct question. But he was mistaken. Brought suddenly and involuntarily to the brink of confession, Arthur shrank back, and felt less disposed towards it than ever. The conversation had taken a more serious tone than he had intended — it would quite mislead Irwine — he would imagine there was a deep passion for Hetty, while there was no such thing. He was conscious of coloring, and was annoyed at his boyishness.

"Oh no, no danger," he said as indifferently as he could. "I don't know that I am more liable to irresolution than other people; only there are little incidents now and then that set one speculating on what might happen in the future."

Was there a motive at work under this strange reluctance of Arthur's which had a sort of backstairs influence, not admitted to himself? Our mental business is carried on much in the same way as the business of the State: a great deal of hard work is done by agents who are not acknowledged. In a piece of machinery, too, I believe there is often a small

unnoticeable wheel which has a great deal to do with the motion of the large obvious ones. Possibly there was some such unrecognized agent secretly busy in Arthur's mind at this moment — possibly it was the fear lest he might hereafter find the fact of having made a confession to the Rector a serious annoyance, in case he should *not* be able quite to carry out his good resolutions? I dare not assert that it was not so. The human soul is a very complex thing.

The idea of Hetty had just crossed Mr. Irwine's mind as he looked inquiringly at Arthur, but his disclaiming indifferent answer confirmed the thought which had quickly followed — that there could be nothing serious in that direction. There was no probability that Arthur ever saw her except at church, and at her own home under the eye of Mrs. Poyser; and the hint he had given Arthur about her the other day had no more serious meaning than to prevent him from noticing her so as to rouse the little chit's vanity, and in this way perturb the rustic drama of her life. Arthur would soon join his regiment, and be far away: no, there could be no danger in that quarter, even if Arthur's character had not been a strong security against it. His honest, patronizing pride in the good-will and respect of everybody about him was a safeguard even against foolish romance, still more against a lower kind of folly. If there had been anything special on Arthur's mind in the previous conversation, it was clear he was not inclined to enter into details, and Mr. Irwine was too delicate to imply even a friendly curiosity. He perceived a change of subject would be welcome, and said, —

"By the way, Arthur, at your colonel's birthday *fête* there were some transparencies that made a great effect in honor of Britannia, and Pitt, and the Loamshire Militia, and, above all, the 'generous youth,' the hero of the day. Don't you think you should get up something of the same sort to astonish our weak minds?"

The opportunity was gone. While Arthur was hesitating, the rope to which he might have clung had drifted away — he must trust now to his own swimming.

In ten minutes from that time, Mr. Irwine was called for on business, and Arthur, bidding him good-by, mounted his horse again with a sense of dissatisfaction, which he tried to quell by determining to set off for Eagledale without an hour's delay.

## BOOK II.

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### CHAPTER XVII.

IN WHICH THE STORY PAUSES A LITTLE.

"THIS Rector of Broxton is little better than a pagan!" I hear one of my readers exclaim. "How much more edifying it would have been if you had made him give Arthur some truly spiritual advice! You might have put into his mouth the most beautiful things—quite as good as reading a sermon."

Certainly I could, if I held it the highest vocation of the novelist to represent things as they never have been and never will be. Then, of course, I might refashion life and character entirely after my own liking; I might select the most unexceptionable type of clergyman, and put my own admirable opinions into his mouth on all occasions. But it happens, on the contrary, that my strongest effort is to avoid any such arbitrary picture, and to give a faithful account of men and things as they have mirrored themselves in my mind. The mirror is doubtless defective; the outlines will sometimes be disturbed, the reflection faint or confused; but I feel as much bound to tell you as precisely as I can what that reflection is, as if I were in the witness-box narrating my experience on oath.

Sixty years ago—it is a long time, so no wonder things have changed—all clergymen were not zealous; indeed there is reason to believe that the number of zealous clergymen was small, and it is probable that if one among the small minority had owned the livings of Broxton and Hayslope in the year 1799, you would have liked him no better than you like Mr. Irwine. Ten to one, you would have thought him a tasteless, indiscreet, methodistical man. It is so very rarely that facts hit that nice medium required by our own enlightened opinions and refined taste! Perhaps you will say, "Do improve the facts a little, then; make them more accordant with those correct views which it is our privilege to possess. The world is not just what we like; do touch it up with a tasteful pencil, and make believe it is not quite such a mixed entangled affair. Let all people who hold unexceptionable

opinions act unexceptionably. Let your most faulty characters always be on the wrong side, and your virtuous ones on the right. Then we shall see at a glance whom we are to condemn, and whom we are to approve. Then we shall be able to admire, without the slightest disturbance of our prepossessions: we shall hate and despise with that true ruminant relish which belongs to undoubting confidence."

But, my good friend, what will you do then with your fellow-parishioner who opposes your husband in the vestry? — with your newly-appointed vicar, whose style of preaching you find painfully below that of his regretted predecessor? — with the honest servant who worries your soul with her one failing? — with your neighbor, Mrs. Green, who was really kind to you in your last illness, but has said several ill-natured things about you since your convalescence? — nay, with your excellent husband himself, who has other irritating habits besides that of not wiping his shoes? These fellow-mortals, every one, must be accepted as they are: you can neither straighten their noses, nor brighten their wit, nor rectify their dispositions; and it is these people — amongst whom your life is passed — that it is needful you should tolerate, pity, and love: it is these more or less ugly, stupid, inconsistent people, whose movements of goodness you should be able to admire — for whom you should cherish all possible hopes, all possible patience. And I would not, even if I had the choice, be the clever novelist who could create a world so much better than this, in which we get up in the morning to do our daily work, that you would be likely to turn a harder, colder eye on the dusty streets and the common green fields — on the real breathing men and women, who can be chilled by your indifference or injured by your prejudice; who can be cheered and helped onward by your fellow-feeling, your forbearance, your out-spoken, brave justice.

So I am content to tell my simple story, without trying to make things seem better than they were; dreading nothing, indeed, but falsity, which, in spite of one's best efforts, there is reason to dread. Falsehood is so easy, truth so difficult. The pencil is conscious of a delightful facility in drawing a griffin — the longer the claws, and the larger the wings, the better; but that marvellous facility which we mistook for genius is apt to forsake us when we want to draw a real unexaggerated lion. Examine your words well, and you will find that even when you have no motive to be false, it is a very hard thing to say the exact truth, even about your own imme-

diate feelings—much harder than to say something fine about them which is *not* the exact truth.

It is for this rare, precious quality of truthfulness that I delight in many Dutch paintings, which lofty-minded people despise. I find a source of delicious sympathy in these faithful pictures of a monotonous homely existence, which has been the fate of so many more among my fellow-mortals than a life of pomp or of absolute indigence, of tragic suffering or of world-stirring actions. I turn, without shrinking, from cloud-borne angels, from prophets, sibyls, and heroic warriors, to an old woman bending over her flower-pot, or eating her solitary dinner, while the noonday light, softened perhaps by a screen of leaves, falls on her mob-cap, and just touches the rim of her spinning-wheel, and her stone jug, and all those cheap common things which are the precious necessities of life to her;—or I turn to that village wedding, kept between four brown walls, where an awkward bridegroom opens the dance with a high-shouldered, broad-faced bride, while elderly and middle-aged friends look on, with very irregular noses and lips, and probably with quart-pots in their hands, but with an expression of unmistakable contentment and good-will. "Foh!" says my idealistic friend, "what vulgar details! What good is there in taking all these pains to give an exact likeness of old women and clowns? What a low phase of life!—what clumsy, ugly people!"

But bless us, things may be lovable that are not altogether handsome, I hope? I am not at all sure that the majority of the human race have not been ugly, and even among those "lords of their kind," the British, squat figures, ill-shapen nostrils, and dingy complexions are not startling exceptions. Yet there is a great deal of family love amongst us. I have a friend or two whose class of features is such that the Apollo curl on the summit of their brows would be decidedly trying; yet to my certain knowledge tender hearts have beaten for them, and their miniatures—flattering, but still not lovely—are kissed in secret by motherly lips. I have seen many an excellent matron, who could never in her best days have been handsome, and yet she had a packet of yellow love-letters in a private drawer, and sweet children showered kisses on her sallow cheeks. And I believe there have been plenty of young heroes, of middle stature and feeble beards, who have felt quite sure they could never love anything more insignificant than a Diana, and yet have found themselves in middle life happily settled with a wife who waddles. Yes! thank

God ; human feeling is like the mighty rivers that bless the earth : it does not wait for beauty — it flows with resistless force and brings beauty with it.

All honor and reverence to the divine beauty of form ! Let us cultivate it to the utmost in men, women, and children — in our gardens and in our houses. But let us love that other beauty too, which lies in no secret of proportion, but in the secret of deep human sympathy. Paint us an angel, if you can, with a floating violet robe, and a face paled by the celestial light ; paint us yet oftener a Madonna, turning her mild face upward and opening her arms to welcome the divine glory ; but do not impose on us any æsthetic rules which shall banish from the region of Art those old women scraping carrots with their work-worn hands, those heavy clowns taking holiday in a dingy pot-house, those rounded backs and stupid weather-beaten faces that have bent over the spade and done the rough work of the world — those homes with their tin pans, their brown pitchers, their rough curs, and their clusters of onions. In this world there are so many of these common coarse people, who have no picturesque sentimental wretchedness ! It is so needful we should remember their existence, else we may happen to leave them quite out of our religion and philosophy, and frame lofty theories which only fit a world of extremes. Therefore let Art always remind us of them ; therefore let us always have men ready to give the loving pains of a life to the faithful representing of commonplace things — men who see beauty in these commonplace things, and delight in showing how kindly the light of heaven falls on them. There are few prophets in the world ; few sublimely beautiful women ; few heroes. I can't afford to give all my love and reverence to such rarities : I want a great deal of those feelings for my every-day fellow-men, especially for the few in the foreground of the great multitude, whose faces I know, whose hands I touch, for whom I have to make way with kindly courtesy. Neither are picturesque lazzaroni or romantic criminals half so frequent as your common laborer, who gets his own bread, and eats it vulgarly but creditably with his own pocket-knife. It is more needful that I should have a fibre of sympathy connecting me with that vulgar citizen who weighs out my sugar in a vilely assorted cravat and waistcoat, than with the handsomest rascal in red scarf and green feathers ; — more needful that my heart should swell with loving admiration at some trait of gentle goodness in the faulty people who sit at the same



hearth with me, or in the clergyman of my own parish, who is perhaps rather too corpulent, and in other respects is not an Oberlin or a Tillotson, than at the deeds of heroes whom I shall never know except by hearsay, or at the sublimest abstract of all clerical graces that was ever conceived by an able novelist.

And so I come back to Mr. Irwine, with whom I desire you to be in perfect charity, far as he may be from satisfying your demands on the clerical character. Perhaps you think he was not — as he ought to have been — a living demonstration of the benefits attached to a national church? But I am not sure of that; at least I know that the people in Broxton and Hayslope would have been very sorry to part with their clergyman, and that most faces brightened at his approach; and until it can be proved that hatred is a better thing for the soul than love, I must believe that Mr. Irwine's influence in his parish was a more wholesome one than that of the zealous Mr. Ryde, who came there twenty years afterwards, when Mr. Irwine had been gathered to his fathers. It is true, Mr. Ryde insisted strongly on the doctrines of the Reformation, visited his flock a great deal in their own homes, and was severe in rebuking the aberrations of the flesh — put a stop, indeed, to the Christmas rounds of the church singers, as promoting drunkenness, and too light a handling of sacred things. But I gathered from Adam Bede, to whom I talked of these matters in his old age, that few clergymen could be less successful in winning the hearts of their parishioners than Mr. Ryde. They learned a great many notions about doctrine from him, so that almost every church-goer under fifty began to distinguish as well between the genuine gospel and what did not come precisely up to that standard, as if he had been born and bred a Dissenter; and for some time after his arrival there seemed to be quite a religious movement in that quiet rural district. "But," said Adam, "I've seen pretty clear, ever since I was a young un, as religion's something else besides notions. It isn't notions sets people doing the right thing — it's feelings. It's the same with the notions in religion as it is with math'matics, — a man may be able to work problems straight off in's head as he sits by the fire and smokes his pipe; but if he has to make a machine or a building, he must have a will and a resolution, and love something else better than his own ease. Somehow, the congregation began to fall off, and people began to speak light o' Mr. Ryde. I believe he meant right at bottom; but, you see, he

was sourish-tempered, and was for beating down prices with the people as worked for him; and his preaching wouldn't go down well with that sauce. And he wanted to be like my lord judge i' the parish, punishing folks for doing wrong; and he scolded 'em from the pulpit as if he'd been a Ranter, and yet he couldn't abide the Dissenters, and was a deal more set against 'em than Mr. Irwine was. And then he didn't keep within his income, for he seemed to think at first go-off that six hundred a-year was to make him as big a man as Mr. Donnithorne: that's a sore mischief I've often seen with the poor curates jumping into a bit of a living all of a sudden. Mr. Ryde was a deal thought on at a distance, I believe, and he wrote books; but as for math'matics and the natur o' things, he was as ignorant as a woman. He was very knowing about doctrines, and used to call 'em the bulwarks of the Reformation; but I've always mistrusted that sort o' learning as leaves folks foolish and unreasonable about business. Now Mester Irwine was as different as could be: as quick! — he understood what you meant in a minute; and he knew all about building, and could see when you'd made a good job. And he behaved as much like a gentleman to the farmers, and th' old women and the laborers, as he did to the gentry. You never saw *him* interfering and scolding, and trying to play th' emperor. Ah! he was a fine man as ever you set eyes on; and so kind to's mother and sisters. That poor sickly Miss Anne — he seemed to think more of her than of anybody else in the world. There wasn't a soul in the parish had a word to say against him; and his servants stayed with him till they were so old and pottering, he had to hire other folks to do their work."

"Well," I said, "that was an excellent way of preaching in the week-days; but I dare say, if your old friend Mr. Irwine were to come to life again, and get into the pulpit next Sunday, you would be rather ashamed that he didn't preach better after all your praise of him."

"Nay, nay," said Adam, broadening his chest and throwing himself back in his chair, as if he were ready to meet all inferences, "nobody has ever heard me say Mr. Irwine was much of a preacher. He didn't go into deep speritial experience; and I know there's a deal in a man's inward life as you can't measure by the square, and say, 'Do this and that 'll follow,' and, 'Do that and this 'll follow.' There's things go on in the soul, and times when feelings come into you like a rushing mighty wind, as the Scripture says, and part your

life in two a'most, so as you look back on yourself as if you was somebody else. Those are things as you can't bottle up in a 'do this' and 'do that;' and I'll go so far with the strongest Methodist ever you'll find. That shows me there's deep speritual things in religion. You can't make much out wi' talking about it, but you feel it. Mr. Irwine didn't go into those things: he preached short moral sermons, and that was all. But then he acted pretty much up to what he said; he didn't set up for being so different from other folks one day, and then be as like 'em as two peas the next. And he made folks love him and respect him, and that was better nor stirring up their gall wi' being over-busy. Mrs. Poyser used to say — you know she would have her word about everything — she said, Mr. Irwine was like a good meal o' victual, you were the better for him without thinking on it, and Mr. Ryde was like a dose o' physic, he gripped you and worreted you, and after all he left you much the same."

"But didn't Mr. Ryde preach a great deal more about that spiritual part of religion that you talk of, Adam? Couldn't you get more out of his sermons than out of Mr. Irwine's?"

"Eh, I knowna. He preached a deal about doctrines. But I've seen pretty clear ever since I was a young un, as religion's something else besides doctrines and notions. I look at it as if the doctrines was like finding names for your feelings, so as you can talk of 'em when you've never known 'em, just as a man may talk o' tools when he knows their names, though he's never so much as seen 'em, still less handled 'em. I've heard a deal o' doctrine i' my time, for I used to go after the Dissenting preachers along wi' Seth, when I was a lad o' seventeen, and got puzzling myself a deal about th' Arminians and the Calvinists. The Wesleyans, you know, are strong Arminians; and Seth, who could never abide anything harsh, and was always for hoping the best, held fast by the Wesleyans from the very first; but I thought I could pick a hole or two in their notions, and I got disputing wi' one o' the class leaders down at Treddles'on, and harassed him so, first o' this side and then o' that, till at last he said, 'Young man, it's the devil making use o' your pride and conceit as a weapon to war against the simplicity o' the truth.' I couldn't help laughing then, but as I was going home, I thought the man wasn't far wrong. I began to see as all this weighing and sifting what this text means and that text means, and whether folks are saved all by God's grace, or whether there goes an ounce o'

their own will to't, was no part o' real religion at all. You may talk o' these things for hours on end, and you'll only be all the more coxy and conceited for't. So I took to going nowhere but to church, and hearing nobody but Mr. Irwine, for he said nothing but what was good, and what you'd be the wiser for remembering. And I found it better for my soul to be humble before the mysteries o' God's dealings, and not be making a clatter about what I could never understand. And they're poor foolish questions after all; for what have we got either inside or outside of us but what comes from God? If we've got a resolution to do right, He gave it us, I reckon, first or last; but I see plain enough we shall never do it without a resolution, and that's enough for me."

Adam, you perceive, was a warm admirer, perhaps a partial judge, of Mr. Irwine, as, happily, some of us still are of the people we have known familiarly. Doubtless it will be despised as a weakness by that lofty order of minds who pant after the ideal, and are oppressed by a general sense that their emotions are of too exquisite a character to find fit objects among their every-day fellow-men. I have often been favored with the confidence of these select natures, and find them concur in the experience that great men are over-estimated and small men are insupportable; that if you would love a woman without ever looking back on your love as a folly, she must die while you are courting her; and if you would maintain the slightest belief in human heroism, you must never make a pilgrimage to see the hero. I confess I have often meanly shrunk from confessing to these accomplished and acute gentlemen what my own experience has been. I am afraid I have often smiled with hypocritical assent, and gratified them with an epigram on the fleeting nature of our illusions, which any one moderately acquainted with French literature can command at a moment's notice. Human converse, I think some wise man has remarked, is not rigidly sincere. But I herewith discharge my conscience, and declare, that I have had quite enthusiastic movements of admiration towards old gentlemen who spoke the worst English, who were occasionally fretful in their temper, and who had never moved in a higher sphere of influence than that of parish overseer; and that the way in which I have come to the conclusion that human nature is lovable — the way I have learnt something of its deep pathos, its sublime mysteries — has been by living a great deal among people more or less commonplace and vulgar, of whom you would perhaps hear nothing very sur-

prising if you were to inquire about them in the neighborhoods where they dwelt. Ten to one most of the small shopkeepers in their vicinity saw nothing at all in them. For I have observed this remarkable coincidence, that the select natures who pant after the ideal, and find nothing in pantaloons or petticoats great enough to command their reverence and love, are curiously in unison with the narrowest and pettiest. For example, I have often heard Mr. Gedge, the landlord of the Royal Oak, who used to turn a bloodshot eye on his neighbors in the village of Shepperton, sum up his opinion of the people in his own parish — and they were all the people he knew — in these emphatic words: “Ay, sir, I’ve said it often, and I’ll say it again, they’re a poor lot i’ this parish — a poor lot, sir, big and little.” I think he had a dim idea that if he could migrate to a distant parish, he might find neighbors worthy of him; and indeed he did subsequently transfer himself to the Saracen’s Head, which was doing a thriving business in the back street of a neighboring market-town. But, oddly enough, he has found the people up that back street of precisely the same stamp as the inhabitants of Shepperton — “a poor lot, sir, big and little, and them as comes for a go o’ gin are no better than them as comes for a pint o’ twopenny — a poor lot.”

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CHURCH.

“**HETTY**, Hetty, don’t you know church begins at two, and it’s gone half after one a’ready? Have you got nothing better to think on this good Sunday, as poor old Thias Bede’s to be put into the ground, and him drowned i’ th’ dead o’ the night, as it’s enough to make one’s back run cold, bnt you must be ’dizening yourself as if there was a wedding istid of a funeral?”

“Well, aunt,” said Hetty, “I can’t be ready so soon as everybody else, when I’ve got Totty’s things to put on. And I’d ever such work to make her stand still.”

Hetty was coming down-stairs, and Mrs. Poyser, in her plain bonnet and shawl, was standing below. If ever a girl looked as if she had been made of roses, that girl was Hetty in her Sunday hat and frock. For her hat was trimmed with

pink, and her frock had pink spots, sprinkled on a white ground. There was nothing but pink and white about her, except in her dark hair and eyes and her little buckled shoes. Mrs. Poyser was provoked at herself, for she could hardly keep from smiling, as any mortal is inclined to do at the sight of pretty round things. So she turned without speaking, and joined the group outside the house door, followed by Hetty, whose heart was fluttering so at the thought of some one she expected to see at church, that she hardly felt the ground she trod on.

And now the little procession set off. Mr. Poyser was in his Sunday suit of drab, with a red-and-green waistcoat, and a green watch-ribbon having a large cornelian seal attached, pendent like a plumb-line from that promontory where his watch-pocket was situated; a silk handkerchief of a yellow tone round his neck; and excellent gray ribbed stockings, knitted by Mrs. Poyser's own hand, setting off the proportions of his leg. Mr. Poyser had no reason to be ashamed of his leg, and suspected that the growing abuse of top-boots and other fashions tending to disguise the nether limbs, had their origin in a pitiable degeneracy of the human calf. Still less had he reason to be ashamed of his round jolly face, which was good-humor itself as he said, "Come, Hetty — come, little uns!" and giving his arm to his wife, led the way through the causeway gate into the yard.

The "little uns" addressed were Marty and Tommy, boys of nine and seven, in little fustian tailed coats and knee-breeches, relieved by rosy cheeks and black eyes; looking as much like their father as a very small elephant is like a very large one. Hetty walked between them, and behind came patient Molly, whose task it was to carry Totty through the yard, and over all the wet places on the road; for Totty, having speedily recovered from her threatened fever, had insisted on going to church to-day, and especially on wearing her red-and-black necklace outside her tippet. And there were many wet places for her to be carried over this afternoon, for there had been heavy showers in the morning, though now the clouds had rolled off and lay in towering silvery masses on the horizon.

You might have known it was Sunday if you had only waked up in the farmyard. The cocks and hens seemed to know it, and made only crooning subdued noises; the very bull-dog looked less savage, as if he would have been satisfied with a smaller bite than usual. The sunshine seemed to call

all things to rest and not to labor; it was asleep itself on the moss-grown cow-shed; on the group of white ducks nestling together with their bills tucked under their wings; on the old black sow stretched languidly on the straw, while her largest young one found an excellent spring-bed on his mother's fat ribs; on Alick, the shepherd, in his new smock-frock, taking an uneasy siesta, half-sitting, half-standing on the granary steps. Alick was of opinion that church, like other luxuries, was not to be indulged in often by a foreman who had the weather and the ewes on his mind. "Church! nay—I'n gotten summat else to think on," was an answer which he often uttered in a tone of bitter significance that silenced further question. I feel sure Alick meant no irreverence; indeed, I know that his mind was not of a speculative, negative cast, and he would on no account have missed going to church on Christmas Day, Easter Sunday, and "Whissuntide." But he had a general impression that public worship and religious ceremonies, like other non-productive employments, were intended for people who had leisure.

"There's father a-standing at the yard-gate," said Martin Poyser. "I reckon he wants to watch us down the field. It's wonderful what sight he has, and him turned seventy-five."

"Ah, I often think it's wi' th' old folks as it is wi' the babbies," said Mrs. Poyser; "they're satisfied wi' looking, no matter what they're looking at. It's God A'mighty's way o' quietening 'em, I reckon, afore they go to sleep."

Old Martin opened the gate as he saw the family procession approaching, and held it wide open, leaning on his stick—pleased to do this bit of work; for, like all old men whose life has been spent in labor, he liked to feel that he was still useful—that there was a better crop of onions in the garden because he was by at the sowing—and that the cows would be milked the better if he stayed at home on a Sunday afternoon to look on. He always went to church on Sacrament Sundays, but not very regularly at other times; on wet Sundays, or whenever he had a touch of rheumatism, he used to read the three first chapters of Genesis instead.

"They'll ha' putten Thias Bede i' the ground afore ye get to the churchyard," he said, as his son came up. "It 'ud ha' been better luck if they'd ha' buried him i' the forenoon when the rain was fallin'; there's no likelihoods of a drop now; an' the moon lies like a boat there, dost see? That's a sure sign o' fair weather—there's a many as is false, but that's sure."

"Ay, ay," said the son, "I'm in hopes it'll hold up now."

"Mind what the parson says, mind what the parson says, my lads," said Grandfather to the black-eyed youngsters in knee-breeches, conscious of a marble or two in their pockets, which they looked forward to handling a little, secretly, during the sermon.

"Dood-by, dandad," said Totty. "Me doin to church. Me dot my netlace on. Dive me a peppermint."

Grandad, shaking with laughter at this "deep little wench," slowly transferred his stick to his left hand, which held the gate open, and slowly thrust his finger into the waistcoat-pocket on which Totty had fixed her eyes with a confident look of expectation.

And when they were all gone, the old man leaned on the gate again, watching them across the lane along the Home Close, and through the far gate, till they disappeared behind a bend in the hedge. For the hedgerows in those days shut out one's view, even on the better-managed farms; and this afternoon, the dog-roses were tossing out their pink wreaths, the nightshade was in its yellow and purple glory, the pale honeysuckle grew out of reach, peeping high up out of a holly bush, and over all an ash or a sycamore every now and then threw its shadow across the path.

There were acquaintances at other gates who had to move aside and let them pass: at the gate of the Home Close there was half the dairy of cows standing one behind the other, extremely slow to understand that their large bodies might be in the way; at the far gate there was the mare holding her head over the bars, and beside her the liver-colored foal with its head towards its mother's flank, apparently still much embarrassed by its own straddling existence. The way lay entirely through Mr. Poyser's own fields till they reached the main road leading to the village, and he turned a keen eye on the stock and the crops as they went along, while Mrs. Poyser was ready to supply a running commentary on them all. The woman who manages a dairy has a large share in making the rent, so she may well be allowed to have her opinion on stock and their "keep" — an exercise which strengthens her understanding so much that she finds herself able to give her husband advice on most other subjects.

"There's that short-horned Sally," she said, as they entered the Home Close, and she caught sight of the meek beast that lay chewing the cud, and looking at her with a sleepy eye. "I begin to hate the sight o' the cow; and I say now what I said three weeks ago, the sooner we get rid of her the better,



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for there's that little yellow cow as doesn't give half the milk, and yet I've twice as much butter from her."

"Why, thee't not like the women in general," said Mr. Poyser; "they like the short-horns, as give such a lot o' milk. There's Chowne's wife wants him to buy no other sort."

"What's it sinnify what Chowne's wife likes? — a poor soft thing, wi' no more head-piece nor a sparrow. She'd take a big cullender to strain her lard wi', and then wonder as the scratchins run through. I've seen enough of her to know as I'll niver take a servant from her house again — all huggernugger — and you'd niver know, when you went in, whether it was Monday or Friday, the wash draggin' on to th' end o' the week; and as for her cheese, I know well enough it rose like a loaf in a tin last year. And then she talks o' the weather bein' i' fault, as there's folks 'ud stand on their heads and then say the fault was i' their boots."

"Well, Chowne's been wanting to buy Sally, so we can get rid of her if thee lik'st," said Mr. Poyser, secretly proud of his wife's superior power of putting two and two together; indeed, on recent market-days he had more than once boasted of her discernment in this very matter of short-horns.

"Ay, them as choose a soft for a wife may's well buy up the short-horns, for if you get your head stuck in a bog your legs may's well go after it. Eh! talk o' legs, there's legs for you," Mrs. Poyser continued, as Totty, who had been set down now the road was dry, toddled on in front of her father and mother.

"There's shapes! An' she's got such a long foot, she'll be her father's own child."

"Ay, she'll be welly such a one as Hetty i' ten years' time, on'y she's got *thy* colored eyes. I niver remember a blue eye i' my family; my mother had eyes as black as sloes, just like Hetty's."

"The child 'ull be none the worse for having summat as isn't like Hetty. An' I'm none for having her so over pretty. Though for the matter o' that, there's people wi' light hair an' blue eyes as pretty as them wi' black. If Dinah had got a bit o' color in her cheeks, an' didn't stick that Methodist cap on her head, enough to frighten the cows, folks 'ud think her as pretty as Hetty."

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Poyser, with rather a contemptuous emphasis, "thee dostna know the pints of a woman. The men 'ud niver run after Dinah as they would after Hetty."

"What care I what the men 'ud run after? It's well seen what choice the most of 'em know to make, by the poor drag-

gle-tails o' wives you see, like bits o' gauze ribbin, good for nothing when the color's gone."

"Well, well, thee canstna say but what I knowed how to make a choice when I married thee," said Mr. Poyser, who usually settled little conjugal disputes by a compliment of this sort; "and thee was twice as buxom as Dinah ten year ago."

"I niver said as a woman had need to be ugly to make a good missis of a house. There's Chowne's wife ugly enough to turn the milk an' save the rennet, but she'll niver save nothing any other way. But as for Dinah, poor child, she's niver likely to be buxom as long as she'll make her dinner o' cake and water, for the sake o' giving to them as want. She provokes me past bearing sometimes; and, as I told her, she went clean again' the Scriptur', for that says, 'Love your neighbor as yourself;' 'but,' I said, 'if you loved your neighbor no better nor you do yourself, Dinah, it's little enough you'd do for him. You'd be thinking he might do well enough on a half-empty stomach.' Eh, I wonder where she is this blessed Sunday!—sitting by that sick woman, I dare say, as she'd set her heart on going to all of a sudden."

"Ah, it was a pity sho should take such megrims into her head, when sho might ha' stayed wi' us all summer, and eaten twice as much as she wanted, and it 'nd niver ha' been missed. She made no odds in th' house at all, for she sat as still at her sewing as a bird on the nest, and was uncommon nimble at running to fetch anything. If Hetty gets married, theed'st like to ha' Dinah wi' thee constant."

"It's no use thinking o' that," said Mrs. Poyser. "You might as well beckon to the flying swallow, as ask Dinah to come an' live here comfortable, like other folks. If anything could turn her, I should ha' turned her, for I've talked to her for a hour on end, and scolded her too; for she's my own sister's child, and it behooves me to do what I can for her. But eh, poor thing, as soon as she'd said us 'good-by,' an' got into the cart, an' looked back at me with her pale face, as is welly like her aunt Judith come back from heaven, I begun to be frightened to think o' the set-downs I'd given her; for it comes over you sometimes as if she'd a way o' knowing the rights o' things more nor other folks have. But I'll niver give in as that's 'cause she's a Methodist, no more nor a white calf's white 'cause it eats out o' the same bucket wi' a black un."

"Nay," said Mr. Poyser, with as near an approach to a snarl as his good-nature would allow; "I'n no opinion o' the

Methodists. It's on'y tradesfolks as turns Methodists; you niver knew a farmer bitten wi' them maggots. There's maybe a workman now an' then, as isn't over clever at's work, takes to preachin' an' that, like Seth Bede. But you see Adam, as has got one o' the best head-pieces hereabout, knows better; he's a good Churchman, else I'd never encourage him for a sweetheart for Hetty."

"Why, goodness me," said Mrs. Poyser, who had looked back while her husband was speaking, "look where Molly is with them lads! They're the field's length behind us. How *could* you let 'em do so, Hetty? Anybody might as well set a pictur to watch the children as you. Run back and tell 'em to come on."

Mr. and Mrs. Poyser were now at the end of the second field, so they set Totty on the top of one of the large stones forming the true Loamshire stile, and awaited the loiterers; Totty observing with complacency, "Dey naughty, naughty boys — me dood."

The fact was that this Sunday walk through the fields was fraught with great excitement to Marty and Tommy, who saw a perpetual drama going on in the hedgerows, and could no more refrain from stopping and peeping than if they had been a couple of spaniels or terriers. Marty was quite sure he saw a yellowhammer on the boughs of the great ash, and while he was peeping, he missed the sight of a white-throated stoat, which had run across the path and was described with much fervor by the junior Tommy. Then there was a little greenfinch, just fledged, fluttering along the ground, and it seemed quite possible to catch it, till it managed to flutter under the blackberry bush. Hetty could not be got to give any heed to these things, so Molly was called on for her ready sympathy, and peeped with open mouth wherever she was told, and said "Lawks!" whenever she was expected to wonder.

Molly hastened on with some alarm when Hetty had come back and called to them that her aunt was angry; but Marty ran on first, shouting, "We've found the speckled turkey's nest, mother!" with the instinctive confidence that people who bring good news are never in fault.

"Ah," said Mrs. Poyser, really forgetting all discipline in this pleasant surprise, "that's a good lad; why, where is it?"

"Down in ever such a hole, under the hedge. I saw it first, looking after the greenfinch, and she sat on th' nest."

"You didn't frighten her, I hope," said the mother, "else she'll forsake it."

"No, I went away as still as still, and whispered to Molly — didn't I, Molly?"

"Well, well, now come on," said Mrs. Poyser, "and walk before father and mother, and take your little sister by the hand. We must go straight on now. Good boys don't look after the birds of a Sunday."

"But, mother," said Marty, "you said you'd give half-a-crown to find the speckled turkey's nest. Mayn't I have the half-crown put into my money-box?"

"We'll see about that, my lad, if you walk along now, like a good boy."

The father and mother exchanged a significant glance of amusement at their eldest-born's acuteness; but on Tommy's round face there was a cloud.

"Mother," he said, half crying, "Marty's got ever so much more money in his box nor I've got in mine."

"Munny, *me* want half-a-toun in *my* bots," said Totty.

"Hush, hush, hush," said Mrs. Poyser, "did ever anybody hear such naughty children? Nobody shall ever see their money-boxes any more, if they don't make haste and go on to church."

This dreadful threat had the desired effect, and through the two remaining fields the three pair of small legs trotted on without any serious interruption, notwithstanding a small pond full of tadpoles *alias* "bullheads," which the lads looked at wistfully.

The damp hay that must be scattered and turned afresh to-morrow was not a cheering sight to Mr. Poyser, who during hay and corn harvest had often some mental struggles as to the benefits of a day of rest; but no temptation would have induced him to carry on any field-work, however early in the morning, on a Sunday; for had not Michael Holdsworth had a pair of oxen "sweltered" while he was ploughing on Good Friday? That was a demonstration that work on sacred days was a wicked thing; and with wickedness of any sort Martin Poyser was quite clear that he would have nothing to do, since money got by such means would never prosper.

"It a'most makes your fingers itch to be at the hay now the sun shines so," he observed, as they passed through the "Big Meadow." "But it's poor foolishness to think o' saving by going against your conscience. There's that Jim Wakefield, as they used to call 'Gentleman Wakefield,' used

to do the same of a Sunday as o' week-days, and took no heed to right or wrong, as if there was nayther God nor devil. An' what's he come to? Why, I saw him myself last market-day a-carrying a basket wi' oranges in't."

"Ah, to be sure," said Mrs. Poyser, emphatically, "you make but a poor trap to catch luck if you go and bait it wi' wickedness. The money as is got so's like to burn holes i' your pocket. I'd niver wish us to leave our lads a sixpence but what was got i' the rightful way. And as for the weather, there's One above makes it, and we must put up wi't: it's nothing of a plague to what the wenches are."

Notwithstanding the interruption in their walk, the excellent habit which Mrs. Poyser's clock had of taking time by the forelock, had secured their arrival at the village while it was still a quarter to two, though almost every one who meant to go to church was already within the churchyard gates. Those who stayed at home were chiefly mothers, like Timothy's Bess, who stood at her own door nursing her baby, and feeling as women feel in that position—that nothing else can be expected of them.

It was not cntirely to see Thias Bede's funeral that the people were standing about the churchyard so long before service began; that was their common practice. The women, indeed, usually entered the church at once, and the farmers' wives talked in an undertone to each other, over the tall pews, about their illnesses and the total failure of doctor's stuff, recommending dandelion-tea, and other home-made specifics, as far preferable—about the servants, and their growing exorbitance as to wagos, whereas the quality of their services declined from year to year, and there was no girl nowadays to be trusted any further than you could see her—about the bad price Mr. Dingall, the Treddleston grocer, was giving for butter, and the reasonable doubts that might be held as to his solvency, notwithstanding that Mrs. Dingall was a sensible woman, and they were all sorry for *her*, for she had very good kin. Meantime the men lingered outside, and hardly any of them except the singers, who had a humming and fragmentary rehearsal to go through, entered the church until Mr. Irwine was in the desk. They saw no reason for that premature entrance,—what could they do in church, if they were there before service began?—and they did not conceive that any power in the universe could take it ill of them if they stayed out and talked a little about "bus'ness."

Chad Cranage looks like quite a new acquaintance to-day, for he has got his clean Sunday face, which always makes his little granddaughter cry at him as a stranger. But an experienced eye would have fixed on him at once as the village blacksmith, after seeing the humble deference with which the big saucy fellow took off his hat and stroked his hair to the farmers; for Chad was accustomed to say that a working man must hold a candle to — a personage understood to be as black as he was himself on week-days; by which evil-sounding rule of conduct he meant what was, after all, rather virtuous than otherwise, namely, that men who had horses to be shod must be treated with respect. Chad and the rougher sort of workmen kept aloof from the grave under the white thorn, where the burial was going forward; but Sandy Jim, and several of the farm-laborers, made a group round it, and stood with their hats off, as fellow-mourners with the mother and sons. Others held a midway position, sometimes watching the group at the grave, sometimes listening to the conversation of the farmers, who stood in a knot near the church door, and were now joined by Martin Poyser, while his family passed into the church. On the outside of this knot stood Mr. Casson, the landlord of the Donnithorne Arms, in his most striking attitude—that is to say, with the forefinger of his right hand thrust between the buttons of his waistcoat, his left hand in his breeches-pocket, and his head very much on one side; looking, on the whole, like an actor who has only a monosyllabic part intrusted to him, but feels sure that the audience discern his fitness for the leading business; curiously in contrast with old Jonathan Burge, who held his hands behind him, and leaned forward coughing asthmatically, with an inward scorn of all knowingness that could not be turned into cash. The talk was in rather a lower tone than usual to-day, hushed a little by the sound of Mr. Irwine's voice reading the final prayers of the burial-service. They had all had their word of pity for poor Thias, but now they had got upon the nearer subject of their own grievances against Satchell, the Squire's bailiff, who played the part of steward so far as it was not performed by old Mr. Donnithorne himself, for that gentleman had the meanness to receive his own rents and make bargains about his own timber. This subject of conversation was an additional reason for not being loud, since Satchell himself might presently be walking up the paved road to the church door. And soon they became suddenly silent; for Mr. Irwine's



voice had ceased, and the group round the white thorn was dispersing itself towards the church.

They all moved aside, and stood with their hats off, while Mr. Irwine passed. Adam and Seth were coming next, with their mother between them; for Joshua Rann officiated as head sexton as well as clerk, and was not yet ready to follow the rector into the vestry. But there was a pause before the three mourners came on: Lisbeth had turned round to look again towards the grave! Ah! there was nothing now but the brown earth under the white thorn. Yet she cried less to-day than she had done any day since her husband's death: along with all her grief there was mixed an unusual sense of her own importance in having a "burial," and in Mr. Irwine's reading a special service for her husband; and besides, she knew the funeral psalm was going to be sung for him. She felt this counter-excitement to her sorrow still more strongly as she walked with her sons towards the church door, and saw the friendly sympathetic nods of their fellow-parishioners.

The mother and sons passed into the church, and one by one the loiterers followed, though some still lingered without; the sight of Mr. Donnithorne's carriage, which was winding slowly up the hill, perhaps helping to make them feel that there was no need for haste.

But presently the sound of the bassoon and the key-bongles burst forth; the evening hymn, which always opened the service, had begun, and every one must now enter and take his place.

I cannot say that the interior of Hayslope Church was remarkable for anything except for the gray age of its oaken pews—great square pews mostly, ranged on each side of a narrow aisle. It was free, indeed, from the modern blemish of galleries. The choir had two narrow pews to themselves in the middle of the right-hand row, so that it was a short process for Joshua Rann to take his place among them as principal bass, and return to his desk after the singing was over. The pulpit and desk, gray and old as the pews, stood on one side of the arch leading into the chancel, which also had its gray square pews for Mr. Donnithorne's family and servants. Yet I assure you these gray pews, with the buff-washed walls, gave a very pleasing tone to this shabby interior, and agreed extremely well with the ruddy faces and bright waistcoats. And there were liberal touches of crimson toward the chancel, for the pulpit and Mr. Donnithorne's own pew had handsome

crimson cloth cushions; and, to close the vista, there was a crimson altar-cloth, embroidered with golden rays by Miss Lydia's own hand.

But even without the crimson cloth, the effect must have been warm and cheering when Mr. Irwine was in the desk, looking benignly round on that simple congregation — on the hardy old men, with bent knees and shoulders, perhaps, but with vigor left for much hedge-clipping and thatching; on the tall stalwart frames and roughly-cut bronzed faces of the stone-cutters and carpenters; on the half-dozen well-to-do farmers, with their apple-cheeked families; and on the clean old women, mostly farm-laborers' wives, with their bit of snow-white cap-border under their black bonnets, and with their withered arms, bare from the elbow, folded passively over their chests. For none of the old people held books — why should they? not one of them could read. But they knew a few "good words" by heart, and their withered lips now and then moved silently, following the service without any very clear comprehension indeed, but with a simple faith in its efficacy to ward off harm and bring blessing. And now all faces were visible, for all were standing up — the little children on the seats peeping over the edge of the gray pews, while good Bishop Ken's evening hymn was being sung to one of those lively psalm-tunes which died out with the last generation of rectors and choral parish-clerks. Melodies die out, like the pipe of Pan, with the ears that love them and listen for them. Adam was not in his usual place among the singers to-day, for he sat with his mother and Seth, and he noticed with surprise that Bartle Massey was absent too: all the more agreeable for Mr. Joshua Rann, who gave out his bass notes with unusual complacency, and threw an extra ray of severity into the glances he sent over his spectacles at the recusant Will Maskery.

I beseech you to imagine Mr. Irwine looking round on this scene, in his ample white surplice, that became him so well, with his powdered hair thrown back, his rich brown complexion, and his finely-cut nostril and upper lip; for there was a certain virtue in that benignant yet keen countenance, as there is in all human faces from which a generous soul beams out. And over all streamed the delicious June sunshine through the old windows, with their desultory patches of yellow, red, and blue, that threw pleasant touches of color on the opposite wall.

I think, as Mr. Irwine looked round to-day, his eyes rested

an instant longer than usual on the square pew occupied by Martin Poyser and his family. And there was another pair of dark eyes that found it impossible not to wander thither, and rest on that round pink-and-white figure. But Hetty was at that moment quite careless of any glances — she was absorbed in the thought that Arthur Donnithorne would soon be coming into church, for the carriage must surely be at the church gate by this time. She had never seen him since she parted with him in the wood on Thursday evening, and oh! how long the time had seemed! Things had gone on just the same as ever since that evening; the wonders that had happened then had brought no changes after them; they were already like a dream. When she heard the church door swinging, her heart beat so, she dared not look up. She felt that her aunt was courtesying; she courtesied herself. That must be old Mr. Donnithorne — he always came first, the wrinkled, small old man, peering round with short-sighted glances at the bowing and courtesying congregation; then she knew Miss Lydia was passing, and though Hetty liked so much to look at her fashionable little coal-scuttle bonnet, with the wreath of small roses round it, she didn't mind it to-day. But there were no more courtesies — no, he was not come; she felt sure there was nothing else passing the pew door but the house-keeper's black bonnet, and the lady's-maid's beautiful straw that had once been Miss Lydia's, and then the powdered heads of the butler and footman. No, he was not there; yet she would look now — she might be mistaken — for, after all, she had not looked. So she lifted up her eyelids and glanced timidly at the cushioned pew in the chancel: — there was no one but old Mr. Donnithorne rubbing his spectacles with his white handkerchief, and Miss Lydia opening the large gilt-edged prayer-book. The chill disappointment was too hard to bear: she felt herself turning pale, her lips trembling; she was ready to cry. Oh, what *should* she do? Everybody would know the reason; they would know she was crying because Arthur was not there. And Mr. Craig, with the wonderful hothouse plant in his button-hole, was staring at her, she knew. It was dreadfully long before the General Confession began, so that she could kneel down. Two great drops *would* fall then, but no one saw them except good-natured Molly, for her aunt and uncle knelt with their backs towards her. Molly, unable to imagine any cause for tears in church except faintness, of which she had a vague traditional knowledge, drew out of her pocket a queer little flat

blue smelling-bottle, and after much labor in pulling the cork out, thrust the narrow neck against Hetty's nostrils. "It donna smell," she whispered, thinking this was a great advantage which old salts had over fresh ones: they did you good without biting your nose. Hetty pushed it away peevishly; but this little flash of temper did what the salts could not have done — it roused her to wipe away the traces of her tears, and try with all her might not to shed any more. Hetty had a certain strength in her vain little nature: she would have borne anything rather than be laughed at, or pointed at with any other feeling than admiration; she would have pressed her own nails into her tender flesh rather than people should know a secret she did not want them to know.

What fluctuations there were in her busy thoughts and feelings, while Mr. Irwine was pronouncing the solemn "Absolution" in her deaf ears, and through all the tones of petition that followed! Anger lay very close to disappointment, and soon won the victory over the conjectures her small ingenuity could devise to account for Arthur's absence on the supposition that he really wanted to come, really wanted to see her again. And by the time she rose from her knees mechanically, because all the rest were rising, the color had returned to her cheeks even with a heightened glow, for she was framing little indignant speeches to herself, saying she hated Arthur for giving her this pain — she would like him to suffer too. Yet while this selfish tumult was going on in her soul, her eyes were bent down on her prayer-book, and the eyelids with their dark fringe looked as lovely as ever. Adam Bode thought so, as he glanced at her for a moment on rising from his knees.

But Adam's thoughts of Hetty did not deafen him to the service; they rather blended with all the other deep feelings for which the church service was a channel to him this afternoon, as a certain consciousness of our entire past and our imagined future blends itself with all our moments of keen sensibility. And to Adam the church service was the best channel he could have found for his mingled regret, yearning, and resignation; its interchange of beseeching cries for help, with outbursts of faith and praise — its recurrent responses and the familiar rhythm of its collects, seemed to speak for him as no other form of worship could have done; as, to those early Christians who had worshipped from their childhood upward in catacombs, the torch-light and shadows must have seemed nearer the Divine presence than the heathenish day-

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light of the streets. The secret of our emotions never lies in the bare object, but in its subtle relations to our own past; no wonder the secret escapes the unsympathizing observer, who might as well put on his spectacles to discern odors.

But there was one reason why even a chance comer would have found the service in Hayslope Church more impressive than in most other village nooks in the kingdom — a reason, of which I am sure you have not the slightest suspicion. It was the reading of our friend Joshua Raun. Where that good shoemaker got his notion of reading from, remained a mystery even to his most intimate acquaintances. I believe, after all, he got it chiefly from Nature, who had poured some of her music into this honest conceited soul, as she had been known to do into other narrow souls before his. She had given him, at least, a fine bass voice and a musical ear; but I cannot positively say whether these alone had sufficed to inspire him with the rich chant in which he delivered the responses. The way he rolled from a rich deep forte into a melancholy cadence, subsiding, at the end of the last word, into a sort of faint resonance, like the lingering vibrations of a fine violoncello, I can compare to nothing for its strong calm melancholy but the rush and cadence of the wind among the autumn boughs. This may seem a strange mode of speaking about the reading of a parish-clerk — a man in rusty spectacles, with stubbly hair, a large occiput, and a prominent crown. But that is Nature's way: she will allow a gentleman of splendid physiognomy and poetic aspirations to sing woefully out of tune, and not give him the slightest hint of it; and takes care that some narrow-browed fellow, trolling a ballad in the corner of a pot-house, shall be as true to his intervals as a bird.

Joshua himself was less proud of his reading than of his singing, and it was always with a sense of heightened importance that he passed from the desk to the choir. Still more to-day: it was a special occasion; for an old man, familiar to all the parish, had died a sad death — not in his bed, a circumstance the most painful to the mind of the peasant — and now the funeral psalm was to be sung in memory of his sudden departure. Moreover, Bartle Massey was not at church, and Joshua's importance in the choir suffered no eclipse. It was a solemn minor strain they sang. The old psalm-tunes have many a wail among them, and the words —

"Thou sweep'st us off as with a flood;  
We vanish hence like dreams" —

seemed to have a closer application than usual in the death of poor Thias. The mother and sons listened, each with peculiar feelings. Lisbeth had a vague belief that the psalm was doing her husband good ; it was part of that decent burial which she would have thought it a greater wrong to withhold from him than to have caused him many unhappy days while he was living. The more there was said about her husband, the more there was done for him, surely the safer he would be. It was poor Lisbeth's blind way of feeling that human love and pity are a ground of faith in some other love. Seth, who was easily touched, shed tears, and tried to recall, as he had done continually since his father's death, all that he had heard of the possibility that a single moment of consciousness at the last might be a moment of pardon and reconciliation ; for was it not written in the very psalm they were singing, that the Divine dealings were not measured and circumscribed by time ? Adam had never been unable to join in a psalm before. *He had known plenty of trouble and vexation since he had been a lad ; but this was the first sorrow that had hemmed in his voice, and strangely enough it was sorrow because the chief source of his past trouble and vexation was forever gone out of his reach.* He had not been able to press his father's hand before their parting, and say, "Father, you know it was all right between us ; I never forgot what I owed you when I was a lad ; you forgive me if I have been too hot and hasty now and then !" Adam thought but little to-day of the hard work and the earnings he had spent on his father : his thoughts ran constantly on what the old man's feelings had been in moments of humiliation, when he had held down his head before the rebukes of his son. When our indignation is borne in submissive silence, we are apt to feel twinges of doubt afterwards as to our own generosity, if not justice ; how much more when the object of our anger has gone into everlasting silence, and we have seen his face for the last time in the meekness of death !

"Ah ! I was always too hard," Adam said to himself. "It's a sore fault in me as I'm so hot and out o' patience with people when they do wrong, and my heart gets shut up against 'em, so as I can't bring myself to forgive 'em. I see clear enough there's more pride nor love in my soul, for I could sooner make a thousand strokes with th' hammer for my father than bring myself to say a kind word to him. And there went plenty o' pride and temper to the strokes, as the devil *will* be having his finger in what we call our duties as well as our sins. May-



hap the best thing I ever did in my life was only doing what was easiest for myself. It's allays been easier for me to work nor to sit still, but the real tough job for me 'ud be to master my own will and temper, and go right against my own pride. It seems to me now, if I was to find father at home to-night, I should behave different; but there's no knowing — perhaps nothing 'ud be a lesson to us if it didn't come too late. It's well we should feel as life's a reckoning we can't make twice over; there's no real making amends in this world, any more nor you can mend a wrong subtraction by doing your addition right."

This was the key-note to which Adam's thoughts had perpetually returned since his father's death, and the solemn wail of the funeral psalm was only an influence that brought back the old thoughts with stronger emphasis. So was the sermon, which Mr. Irwine had chosen with reference to Thias's funeral. It spoke briefly and simply of the words, "In the midst of life we are in death" — how the present moment is all we can call our own for works of mercy, of righteous dealing, and of family tenderness. All very old truths — but what we thought the oldest truth becomes the most startling to us in the week when we have looked on the dead face of one who has made a part of our own lives. For when men want to impress us with the effect of a new and wonderfully vivid light, do they not let it fall on the most familiar objects, that we may measure its intensity by remembering the former dimness?

Then came the moment of the final blessing, when the forever sublime words, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," seemed to blend with the calm afternoon sunshine that fell on the bowed heads of the congregation; and then the quiet rising, the mothers tying on the bonnets of the little maidens who had slept through the sermon, the fathers collecting the prayer-books, until all streamed out through the old archway into the green churchyard, and began their neighborly talk, their simple civilities, and their invitations to tea; for on a Sunday every one was ready to receive a guest — it was the day when all must be in their best clothes and their best humor.

Mr. and Mrs. Poyser paused a minute at the church gate: they were waiting for Adam to come up, not being contented to go away without saying a kind word to the widow and her sons.

"Well, Mrs. Bede," said Mrs. Poyser, as they walked on

together, "you must keep up your heart; husbands and wives must be content when they've lived to rear their children and see one another's hair gray."

"Ay, ay," said Mr. Poyser; "they wouma have long to wait for one another then, anyhow. And ye've got two o' the strapping'st sons i' th' country; and well you may, for I remember poor Thias as fine a broad-shouldered fellow as need to be; and as for you, Mrs. Bede, why you're straighter i' the back nor half the young women now."

"Eh," said Lisbeth, "it's poor luck for the platter to wear well when it's broke i' two. The sooner I'm laid under the thorn the better. I'm no good to nobody now."

Adam never took notice of his mother's little unjust complaints; but Seth said, "Nay, mother, thee mustna say so. Thy sons 'ull never get another mother."

"That's true, lad, that's true," said Mr. Poyser; "and it's wrong on us to give way to grief, Mrs. Bede; for it's like the children cryin' when the fathers and mothers take things from 'em. There's One above knows better nor us."

"Ah," said Mrs. Poyser, "an' it's poor work allays settin' the dead above the livin'. We shall all on us be dead some time, I reckon—it 'ud be better if folks 'nd make much on us beforehand, istid o' beginnin' when we're gone. It's but little good you'll do a-watering the last year's crop."

"Well, Adam," said Mr. Poyser, feeling that his wife's words were, as usual, rather incisive than soothing, and that it would be well to change the subject, "you'll come and see us again now, I hope. I hanna had a talk with you this long while, and the missis here wants you to see what can be done with her best spinuig-wheel, for it's got broke, and it'll be a nice job to mend it—there'll want a bit o' turning. You'll come as soon as you can now, will you?"

Mr. Poyser paused and looked round while he was speaking, as if to see where Hetty was; for the children were running on before. Hetty was not without a companion, and she had, besides, more pink and white about her than ever; for she held in her hand the wonderful pink-and-white hothouse plant, with a very long name—a Scotch name, she supposed, since people said Mr. Craig the gardener was Scotch. Adam took the opportunity of looking round too; and I am sure you will not require of him that he should feel any vexation in observing a pouting expression on Hetty's face as she listened to the gardener's small-talk. Yet in her secret heart she was glad to have him by her side, for she would perhaps learn from

him how it was Arthur had not come to church. Not that she cared to ask him the question, but she hoped the information would be given spontaneously; for Mr. Craig, like a superior man, was very fond of giving information.

Mr. Craig was never aware that his conversation and advances were received coldly, for to shift one's point of view beyond certain limits is impossible to the most liberal and expansive mind; we are none of us aware of the impression we produce on Brazilian monkeys of feeble understanding—it is possible they see hardly anything in us. Moreover, Mr. Craig was a man of sober passions, and was already in his tenth year of hesitation as to the relative advantages of matrimony and bachelorhood. It is true that, now and then, when he had been a little heated by an extra glass of grog, he had been heard to say of Hetty that the "lass was well enough," and that "a man might do worse;" but on convivial occasions men are apt to express themselves strongly.

Martin Poyser held Mr. Craig in honor, as a man who "knew his business," and who had great lights concerning soils and compost; but he was less of a favorite with Mrs. Poyser, who had more than once said in confidence to her husband, "You're mighty fond o' Craig; but for my part, I think he's welly like a cock as thinks the sun's rose o' purpose to hear him crow." For the rest, Mr. Craig was an estimable gardener, and was not without reasons for having a high opinion of himself. He had also high shoulders and high cheek-bones, and hung his head forward a little, as he walked along with his hands in his breeches-pockets. I think it was his pedigree only that had the advantage of being Scotch, and not his "bringing up;" for except that he had a stronger burr in his accent, his speech differed little from that of the Loamshire people about him. But a gardener is Scotch, as a French teacher is Parisian.

"Well, Mr. Poyser," he said, before the good slow farmer had time to speak, "ye'll not be carrying your hay to-morrow, I'm thinking: the glass sticks at 'change,' and ye may rely upo' my word as we'll ha' more downfall afore twenty-four hours is past. Ye see that darkish-blue cloud there upo' the 'rizon—ye know what I mean by the 'rizon, where the land and sky seems to meet?"

"Ay, ay, I see the cloud," said Mr. Poyser, "'rizon or no 'rizon. It's right o'er Mike Holdsworth's fallow, and a foul fallow it is."

"Well, you mark my words, as that cloud 'ull spread o'er

the sky pretty nigh as quick as you'd spread a tarpaulin over one o' your hay-ricks. It's a great thing to ha' studied the look o' the clouds. Lord bless you! th' met'orological almanecks can learn me nothing, but there's a pretty sight o' things I could let *them* up to, if they'd just come to me. And how are *you*, Mrs. Poyser? — thinking o' getherin' the red currants soon, I reckon. You'd a deal better gether 'em afore they're o'er-ripe, wi' such weathor as we've got to look forward to. How do ye do, Mistress Bede?" Mr. Craig continued, without a pause, nodding by the way to Adam and Seth. "I hope y' enjoyed them spinach and gooseberries as I sent Chester with th' other day. If ye want vegetables while ye're in trouble, ye know where to come to. It's well known I'm not giving other folks' things away; for when I've supplied the house, the garden's my own spekilation, and it isna every man th' old Squire could get as 'ud be equil to the undertaking, let alone asking whether he'd be willing. I've got to run my kalkilation fine, I can tell you, to make sure o' getting back the money as I pay the Squire. I should like to see some o' them fellows as make the almanecks looking as far before their noses as I've got to do every year as comes."

"They look pretty fur, though," said Mr. Poyser, turning his head on one side, and speaking in rather a subdued reverential tone. "Why, what could come truer nor that pictur o' the cock wi' the big spurs, as has got its head knocked down wi' th' anchor, an' th' firin', an' the ships behind? Why, that pictur was made afore Christmas, and yit it's come as true as th' Bible. Why, th' oock's France, an' th' anchor's Nelson — an' they told us that beforehand."

"Pee—ee-eh!" said Mr. Craig. "A man doesna want to see fur to know as th' English 'ull beat the French. Why, I know upo' good authority as it's a big Frenchman as reaches five foot high, an' they live upo' spoon-meat mostly. I know a man as his father had a particular knowledge o' the French. I should like to know what them grasshoppers are to do against such fine fellows as our young Captain Arthur. Why, it 'ud astonish a Frenchman only to look at him; his arm's thicker nor a Frenchman's body, I'll be bound, for they pinch theirsells in wi' stays; and it's easy enough, for they've got nothing i' their insides."

"Where *is* the Captain, as he wasna at church to-day?" said Adam. "I was talking to him o' Friday, and he said nothing about his going away."

"Oh, he's only gone to Eagledale for a bit o' fishing; I

reckon he'll be baak again afore many days are o'er, for he's to be at all th' arranging and preparing o' things for the com-in' o' age o' the 30th o' July. But he's fond o' getting away for a bit, now and then. Him and th' old Squire fit one another like frost and flowers."

Mr. Craig smiled and winked slowly as he made this last observation, but the subject was not developed farther, for now they had reached the turning in the road where Adam and his companions must say "good-by." The gardener, too, would have had to turn off in the same direction if he had not accepted Mr. Poyser's invitation to tea. Mrs. Poyser duly seconded the invitation, for she would have held it a deep disgrace not to make her neighbors welcome to her house: personal likes and dislikes must not interfere with that sacred custom. Moreover, Mr. Craig had always been full of civilities to the family at the Hall Farm, and Mrs. Poyser was scrupulous in declaring that she had "nothing to say again" him, on'y it was a pity he couldna be hatched o'er again, an' hatched different."

So Adam and Seth, with their mother between them, wound their way down to the valley and up again to the old house, where a saddened memory had taken the place of a long, long anxiety — where Adam would never have to ask again as he entered, "Where's father?"

And the other family party, with Mr. Craig for company, went back to the pleasant bright house-place at the Hall Farm — all with quiet minds, except Hetty, who knew now where Arthur was gone, but was only the more puzzled and uneasy. For it appeared that his absence was quite voluntary; he need not have gone — he would not have gone if he had wanted to see her. She had a sickening sense that no lot could ever be pleasant to her again if her Thursday night's vision was not to be fulfilled; and in this moment of chill, bare, wintry disappointment and doubt, she looked towards the possibility of being with Arthur again, of meeting his loving glance, and hearing his soft words, with that eager yearning which one may call the "growing pain" of passion.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## ADAM ON A WORKING DAY.

NOTWITHSTANDING Mr. Craig's prophecy, the dark blue cloud dispersed itself without having produced the threatened consequences. "The weather," as he observed the next morning—"the weather, you see, 's a ticklish thing, an' a fool 'ull hit on't sometimes when a wise man misses; that's why the almauecks get so much credit. It's one o' them chancy things as fools thrive on."

This unreasonable behavior of the weather, however, could displease no one else in Hayslope besides Mr. Craig. All hands were to be out in the meadows this morning as soon as the dew had risen; the wives and daughters did double work in every farmhouse, that the maids might give their help in tossing the hay; and when Adam was marching along the lanes, with his basket of tools over his shoulder, he caught the sound of jocose talk and ringing laughter from behind the hedges. The jocose talk of haymakers is best at a distance; like those clumsy bells round the cows' necks, it has rather a coarse sound when it comes close, and may even grate on your ears painfully; but heard from far off, it mingles very prettily with the other joyous sounds of nature. Men's muscles move better when their souls are making merry music, though their merriment is of a poor blundering sort, not at all like the merriment of birds.

And perhaps there is no time in a summer's day more cheering, than when the warmth of the sun is just beginning to triumph over the freshness of the morning—when there is just a lingering hint of early coolness to keep off languor under the delicious influence of warmth. The reason Adam was walking along the lanes at this time was because his work for the rest of the day lay at a country house about three miles off, which was being put in repair for the son of a neighboring squire; and he had been busy since early morning with the packing of panels, doors, and chimney-pieces, in a wagon which was now gone on before him, while Jonathan

Burge himself had ridden to the spot on horseback, to await its arrival and direct the workmen.

This little walk was a rest to Adam, and he was unconsciously under the charm of the moment. It was summer morning in his heart, and he saw Hetty in the sunshine: a sunshine without glare — with slanting rays that tremble between the delicate shadows of the leaves. He thought, yesterday, when he put out his hand to her as they came out of church, that there was a touch of melancholy kindness in her face, such as he had not seen before, and he took it as a sign that she had some sympathy with his family trouble. Poor fellow! that touch of melancholy came from quite another source; but how was he to know? We look at the one little woman's face we love, as we look at the face of our mother earth, and see all sorts of answers to our own yearnings. It was impossible for Adam not to feel that what had happened in the last week had brought the prospect of marriage nearer to him. Hitherto he had felt keenly the danger that some other man might step in and get possession of Hetty's heart and hand, while he himself was still in a position that made him shrink from asking her to accept him. Even if he had had a strong hope that she was fond of him — and his hope was far from being strong — he had been too heavily burthened with other claims to provide a home for himself and Hetty — a home such as he could expect her to be content with after the comfort and plenty of the Farm. Like all strong natures, Adam had confidence in his ability to achieve something in the future; he felt sure he should some day, if he lived, be able to maintain a family, and make a good broad path for himself; but he had too cool a head not to estimate to the full the obstacles that were to be overcome. And the time would be so long! And there was Hetty, like a bright-cheeked apple hanging over the orchard wall, within sight of everybody, and everybody must long for her! To be sure, if she loved him very much, she would be content to wait for him: but *did* she love him? His hopes had never risen so high that he had dared to ask her. He was clear-sighted enough to be aware that her uncle and aunt would have looked kindly on his suit, and indeed without this encouragement he would never have persevered in going to the Farm; but it was impossible to come to any but fluctuating conclusions about Hetty's feelings. She was like a kitten, and had the same distractingly pretty looks, that meant nothing, for everybody that came near her.

But now he could not help saying to himself that the heaviest part of his burden was removed, and that even before the end of another year his circumstances might be brought into a shape that would allow him to think of marrying. It would always be a hard struggle with his mother, he knew: she would be jealous of any wife he might choose, and she had set her mind especially against Hetty — perhaps for no other reason than that she suspected Hetty to be the woman he *had* chosen. It would never do, he feared, for his mother to live in the same house with him when he was married; and yet how hard she would think it if he asked her to leave him! Yes, there was a great deal of pain to be gone through with his mother, but it was a case in which he must make her feel that his will was strong — it would be better for her in the end. For himself, he would have liked that they should all live together till Seth was married, and they might have built a bit themselves to the old house, and made more room. He did not like “to part wi’ th’ lad:” they had hardly ever been separated for more than a day since they were born.

But Adam had no sooner caught his imagination leaping forward in this way — making arrangements for an uncertain future — than he checked himself. “A pretty building I’m making, without either bricks or timber. I’m up i’ the garret a’ready, and haven’t so much as dug the foundation.” Whenever Adam was strongly convinced of any proposition, it took the form of a principle in his mind: it was knowledge to be acted on, as much as the knowledge that damp will cause rust. Perhaps here lay the secret of the hardness he had accused himself of: he had too little fellow-feeling with the weakness that errs in spite of foreseen consequences. Without this fellow-feeling, how are we to get enough patience and charity towards our stumbling, falling companions in the long and changeful journey? And there is but one way in which a strong determined soul can learn it — by getting his heart-strings bound round the weak and erring, so that he must share not only the outward consequence of their error, but their inward suffering. That is a long and hard lesson, and Adam had at present only learned the alphabet of it in his father’s sudden death, which, by annihilating in an instant all that had stimulated his indignation, had sent a sudden rush of thought and memory over what had claimed his pity and tenderness.

But it was Adam’s strength, not its correlative hardness, that influenced his meditations this morning. He had long



made up his mind that it would be wrong as well as foolish for him to marry a blooming young girl, so long as he had no other prospect than that of growing poverty with a growing family. And his savings had been so constantly drawn upon (besides the terrible sweep of paying for Seth's substitute in the militia), that he had not enough money beforehand to furnish even a small cottage, and keep something in reserve against a rainy day. He had good hope that he should be "firmer on his legs" by-and-by; but he could not be satisfied with a vague confidence in his arm and brain; he must have definite plans, and set about them at once. The partnership with Jonathan Burge was not to be thought of at present — there were things implicitly tacked to it that he could not accept; but Adam thought that he and Seth might carry on a little business for themselves in addition to their journeyman's work, by buying a small stock of superior wood and making articles of household furniture, for which Adam had no end of contrivances. Seth might gain more by working at separate jobs under Adam's direction than by his journeyman's work, and Adam, in his over-hours, could do all the "nice" work, that required peouliar skill. The money gained in this way, with the good wages he received as foreman, would soon enable them to get beforehand with the world, so sparingly as they would all live now. No sooner had this little plan shaped itself in his mind than he began to be busy with exact calculations about the wood to be bought, and the particular article of furniture that should be undertaken first — a kitchen cupboard of his own contrivance, with such an ingenious arrangement of sliding-doors and bolts, such convenient nooks for stowing household provender, and such a symmetrical result to the eye, that every good housewife would be in raptures with it, and fall through all the gradations of melancholy longing till her husband promised to buy it for her. Adam pictured to himself Mrs. Poyser examining it with her keen eye, and trying in vain to find out a defioiency; and, of course, close to Mrs. Poyser stood Hetty, and Adam was again beguiled from calculations and contrivances into dreams and hopes. Yes, he would go and see her this evening — it was so long since he had been at the Hall Farm. He would have liked to go to the night-school, to see why Bartle Massey had not been at church yesterday, for he feared his old friend was ill; but, unless he could manage both visits, this last must be put off till to-morrow — the desire to be near Hetty, and to speak to her again, was too strong.

As he made up his mind to this, he was coming very near to the end of his walk, within the sound of the hammers at work on the refitting of the old house. The sound of tools to a clever workman who loves his work is like the tentative sounds of the orchestra to the violinist who has to bear his part in the overture: the strong fibres begin their accustomed thrill, and what was a moment before joy, vexation, or ambition, begins its change into energy. All passion becomes strength when it has an outlet from the narrow limits of our personal lot in the labor of our right arm, the cunning of our right hand, or the still, creative activity of our thought. Look at Adam through the rest of the day, as he stands on the scaffolding with the two-foot ruler in his hand, whistling low while he considers how a difficulty about a floor-joist or a window-frame is to be overcome; or as he pushes one of the younger workmen aside, and takes his place in upheaving a weight of timber, saying, "Let alone, lad! these'st got too much gristle i' thy bones yet;" or as he fixes his keen black eyes on the motions of a workman on the other side of the room, and warns him that his distances are not right. Look at this broad-shouldered man with the bare muscular arms, and the thick firm black hair tossed about like trodden meadow-grass whenever he takes off his paper cap, and with the strong barytone voice bursting every now and then into loud and solemn psalm-tunes, as if seeking an outlet for superfluous strength, yet presently checking himself, apparently crossed by some thought which jars with the singing. Perhaps, if you had not been already in the secret, you might not have guessed what sad memories, what warm affection, what tender fluttering hopes, had their home in this athletic body with the broken finger-nails — in this rough man, who knew no better lyrics than he could find in the Old and New Version and an occasional hymn; who knew the smallest possible amount of profane history; and for whom the motion and shape of the earth, the course of the sun, and the changes of the seasons, lay in the region of mystery just made visible by fragmentary knowledge. It had cost Adam a great deal of trouble, and work in over-hours, to know what he knew over and above the secrets of his handicraft, and that acquaintance with mechanics and figures, and the nature of the materials he worked with, which was made easy to him by inborn inherited faculty — to get the mastery of his pen, and write a plain hand, to spell without any other mistakes than must in fairness be attributed to the unreasonable character of orthog-

raphy rather than to any deficiency in the speller, and, moreover, to learn his musical notes and part-singing. Besides all this, he had read his Bible, including the apocryphal books; "Poor Richard's Almanac," Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," "The Pilgrim's Progress," with Bunyan's Life and "Holy War," a great deal of Bailey's Dictionary, "Valentine and Orson," and part of a "History of Babylon," which Bartle Mussey had lent him. He might have had many more books from Bartle Massey, but he had no time for reading "the commin print," as Lisbeth called it, so busy as he was with figures in all the leisure moments which he did not fill up with extra carpentry.

Adam, you perceive, was by no means a marvellous man, nor, properly speaking, a genius, yet I will not pretend that his was an ordinary character among workmen; and it would not be at all a safe conclusion that the next best man you may happen to see with a basket of tools over his shoulder and a paper cap on his head has the strong conscience and the strong sense, the blended susceptibility and self-command, of our friend Adam. He was not an average man. Yet such men as he are reared here and there in every generation of our peasant artisans — with an inheritance of affections nurtured by a simple family life of common need and common industry, and an inheritance of faculties trained in skilful courageous labor: they make their way upward, rarely as geniuses, most commonly as painstaking honest men, with the skill and conscience to do well the tasks that lie before them. Their lives have no discernible echo beyond the neighborhood where they dwelt, but you are almost sure to find there some good piece of road, some building, some application of mineral produce, some improvement in farming practice, some reform of parish abuses, with which their names are associated by one or two generations after them. Their employers were the richer for them, the work of their hands has worn well, and the work of their brains has guided well the hands of other men. They went about in their youth in flannel or paper caps, in coats black with coal-dust or streaked with lime and red paint; in old age their white hairs are seen in a place of honor at church and at market, and they tell their well-dressed sons and daughters, seated round the bright hearth on winter evenings, how pleased they were when they first earned their twopence a-day. Others there are who die poor, and never put off the workman's coat on week-days: they have not had the art of getting rich; but they are men of trust, and when

they die before the work is all out of them, it is as if some main screw had got loose in a machine; the master who employed them says, "Where shall I find their like?"

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## CHAPTER XX.

## ADAM VISITS THE HALL FARM.

ADAM came back from his work in the empty wagon; that was why he had changed his clothes, and was ready to set out to the Hall Farm when it still wanted a quarter to seven.

"What's thee got thy Sunday cloose on for?" said Lisbeth, complainingly, as he came down-stairs. "Thee artua goin' to th' school i' thy best coat?"

"No, mother," said Adam, quietly. "I'm going to the Hall Farm, but mayhap I may go to the school after, so thee mustna wonder if I'm a bit late. Seth 'ull be at home in half an hour — he's only gone to the village; so thee wutna mind."

"Eh, an' what's thee got thy best cloose on for to go to th' Hall Farm? The Poyser folks see'd thee in 'em yesterday, I warrand. What dost mean by turnin' worki'day into Sunday a-that? It's poor keepin' company wi' folks as donna like to see thee'n i' thy workin' jacket."

"Good-by, mother, I can't stay," said Adam, putting on his hat and going out.

But he had no sooner gone a few paces beyond the door than Lisbeth became uneasy at the thought that she had vexed him. Of course, the secret of her objection to the best clothes was her suspicion that they were put on for Hetty's sake; but deeper than all her peevishness lay the need that her son should love her. She hurried after him, and laid hold of his arm before he had got half-way down to the brook, and said, "Nay, my lad, thee wutna go away angered wi' thy mother, an' her got nought to do but to sit by hersen an' think on thee?"

"Nay, nay, mother," said Adam, gravely, and standing still while he put his arm on her shoulder, "I'm not angered. But I wish, for thy own sake, thee'dst be more contented to let me do what I've made up my mind to do. I'll never be no other than a good son to thee as long as we live. But a man has other feelings besides what he owes to's father and mother; and thee oughtna to want to rule over me body and soul. And

thee must make up thy mind, as I'll not give way to thee where I've a right to do what I like. So let us have no more words about it."

"Eh," said Lisbeth, not willing to show that she felt the real bearing of Adam's words, "an' who likes to see thee i' thy best cloose better nor thy mother? An' when thee'st got thy face washed as clean as the smooth white pibble, an' thy hair combed so nice, and thy eyes a-sparklin' — what else is there as thy old mother should like to look at half so well? An' thee sha't put on thy Sunday cloose when thee lik'st for me — I'll ne'er plague thee no moor about'n."

"Well, well; good-by, mother," said Adam, kissing her, and hurrying away. He saw there was no other means of putting an end to the dialogue. Lisbeth stood still on the spot, shading her eyes and looking after him till he was quite out of sight. She felt to the full all the meaning that had lain in Adam's words, and, as she lost sight of him and turned back slowly into the house, she said aloud to herself — for it was her way to speak her thoughts aloud in the long days when her husband and sons were at their work — "Eh, he'll be tellin' me as he is goin' to bring her home one o' these days; an' she'll be missis o'er me, and I mun look on, belike, while she uses the blue-edged platters, and breaks 'em, mayhap, though there's ne'er been one broke sin' my old man an' me bought 'em at the fair twenty 'ear come next Whissuntide. Eh!" she went on, still louder, as she caught up her knitting from the table, "but she'll ne'er knit the lads' stockings, nor foot 'em nayther, while I live; an' when I'm gone, he'll bethink him as nobody 'ull ne'er fit's leg an' foot as his old mother did. She'll know nothin' o' narrowin' an' heelin', I warrand, an' she'll make a long toe as he canna get's boot on. That's what comes o' marr'in' young wenches. I war gone thirty, an' th' feyther too, afore we war married; an' young enough too. She'll be a poor dratohell by then *she's* thirty, a-marr'in' a-that'n, afore her teeth's all come."

Adam walked so fast that he was at the yard-gate before seven. Martin Poyser and the grandfather were not yet come in from the meadow: every one was in the meadow, even to the black-and-tan terrier — no one kept watch in the yard but the bull-dog; and when Adam reached the house-door, which stood wide open, he saw there was no one in the bright clean house-place. But he guessed where Mrs. Poyser and some one else would be, quite within hearing; so he knocked on the door and said in his strong voice, "Mrs. Poyser within?"

"Come in, Mr. Bede, come in," Mrs. Poyser called out from the dairy. She always gave Adam this title when she received him in her own house. "You may come into the dairy if you will, for I canna justly leave the cheese."

Adam walked into the dairy, where Mrs. Poyser and Nancy were crusing the first evening cheese.

"Why, you might think you war come to a dead-house," said Mrs. Poyser, as he stood in the open doorway; "they're all i' the meadow; but Martin's sure to be in afore long, for they're leaving the hay cocked to-night, ready for carrying first thing to-morrow. I've been forced t' have Nancy in, upo' 'count as Hetty must gether the red currants to-night; the fruit allays ripens so contrairy, just when every hand's wanted. An' there's no trustin' the children to gether it, for they put more into their own mouths nor into the basket; you might as well set the wasps to gether the fruit."

Adam longed to say he would go into the garden till Mr. Poyser came in, but he was not quite courageous enough, so he said, "I could be looking at your spinning-wheel, then, and see what wants doing to it. Perhaps it stands in the house, where I can find it?"

"No, I've put it away in the right-hand parlor; but let it be till I can fetch it and show it yon. I'd be glad now, if you'd go into the garden, and tell Hetty to send Totty in. The child 'ull run in if she's told, an' I know Hetty's lettin' her eat too many ourrants. I'll be much obliged to you, Mr. Bede, if you'll go and send her in; an' there's the York and Lankester roses beautiful in the garden now—you'll like to see 'em. But you'd like a drink o' whey first, p'r'aps; I know you're fond o' whey, as most folks is when they hauna got to crush it out."

"Thank you, Mrs. Poyser," said Adam; "a drink o' whey's allays a treat to me. I'd rather have it than beer any day."

"Ay, ay," said Mrs. Poyser, reaching a small white basin that stood on the shelf, and dipping it into the whey-tub, "the smell o' bread's sweet t' everybody but the baker. The Miss Irwines allays say, 'Oh, Mrs. Poyser, I envy you your dairy; and I envy you your chickens; and what a beautiful thing a farmhouse is, to be sure!' An' I say, 'Yes; a farmhouse is a fine thing for them as look on, an' don't know the liftin', an' the stanniu', an' the worritin' o' th' inside, as belongs to't."

"Why, Mrs. Poyser, you wouldn't like to live anywhere else but in a farmhouse, so well as you manage it," said Adam,

taking the basin; "and there can be nothing to look at pleasanter nor a fine milch cow, standing up to'ts knees in pasture, and the new milk frothing in the pail, and the fresh butter ready for market, and the calves, and the poultry. Here's to your health, and may you always have strength to look after your own dairy, and set a pattern t' all the farmers' wives in the country."

Mrs. Poyser was not to be caught in the weakness of smiling at a compliment, but a quiet complacency overspread her face like a stealing sunbeam, and gave a milder glance than usual to her blue gray eyes, as she looked at Adam drinking the whey. Ah! I think I taste that whey now—with a flavor so delicate that one can hardly distinguish it from an odor, and with that soft gliding warmth that fills one's imagination with a still, happy dreaminess. And the light music of the dropping whey is in my ears, mingling with the twittering of a bird outside the wire network window—the window overlooking the garden, and shaded by tall Gueldres roses.

"Have a little more, Mr. Bede?" said Mrs. Poyser, as Adam set down the basin.

"No, thank you; I'll go into the garden now, and send in the little lass."

"Ay, do; and tell her to come to her mother in the dairy."

Adam walked round by the rick-yard, at present empty of ricks, to the little wooden gate leading into the garden—once the well-tended kitchen-garden of a manor-house; now, but for the handsome brick wall with stone coping that ran along one side of it, a true farmhouse garden, with hardy perennial flowers, unpruned fruit-trees, and kitchen vegetables growing together in careless, half neglected abundance. In that leafy, flowery, bushy time, to look for any one in this garden was like playing at "hide-and-seek." There were the tall hollyhocks beginning to flower, and dazzle the eye with their pink, white, and yellow; there were syringas and Gueldres roses, all large and disorderly for want of trimming; there were leafy walls of scarlet beans and late peas; there was a row of bushy filberts in one direction, and in another a huge apple-tree making a barren circle under its low-spreading boughs. But what signified a barren patch or two? The garden was so large. There was always a superfluity of broad beans—it took nine or ten of Adam's strides to get to the end of the uncut grass walk that ran by the side of them; and as for other vegetables, there was so much more room than was

necessary for them, that in the rotation of crops a large flourishing bed of groundsel was of yearly occurrence on one spot or other. The very rose-trees, at which Adam stopped to pluck one, looked as if they grew wild; they were all huddled together in bushy masses, now flaunting with wide open petals, almost all of them of the streaked pink-and-white kind, which doubtless dated from the union of the houses of York and Lancaster. Adam was wise enough to choose a compact Provence rose that peeped out half smothered by its flaunting scentless neighbors, and held it in his hand—he thought he should be more at ease holding something in his hand—as he walked on to the far end of the garden, where he remembered there was the largest row of currant-trees, not far off from the great yew-tree arbor.

But he had not gone many steps beyond the roses, when he heard the shaking of a bough, and a boy's voice saying,—

"Now, then, Totty, hold out your pinny—there's a duck."

The voice came from the boughs of a tall cherry-tree, where Adam had no difficulty in discerning a small blue-pinafores figure perched in a commodious position where the fruit was thickest. Doubtless Totty was below, behind the screen of peas. Yes—with her bonnet hanging down her back, and her fat face, dreadfully smeared with red juice, turned up towards the cherry-tree, while she held her little round hole of a mouth and her red-stained pinafore to receive the promised downfall. I am sorry to say, more than half the cherries that fell were hard and yellow instead of juicy and red; but Totty spent no time in useless regrets, and she was already sucking the third juiciest when Adam said, "There now, Totty, you've got your cherries. Run into the house with 'em to mother—she wants you—she's in the dairy. Run in this minute—there's a good little girl."

He lifted her up in his strong arms and kissed her as he spoke, a ceremony which Totty regarded as a tiresome interruption to cherry-eating; and when he set her down she trotted off quite silently towards the house, sucking her cherries as she went along.

"Tommy, my lad, take care you're not shot for a little thieving bird," said Adam, as he walked on towards the currant-trees.

He could see there was a large basket at the end of the row: Hetty would not be far off, and Adam already felt as if she were looking at him. Yet when he turned the corner she was standing with her back towards him, and stooping to gather



the low-hanging fruit. Strange that she had not heard him coming! perhaps it was because she was making the leaves rustle. She started when she became conscious that some one was near — started so violently that she dropped the basin with the currants in it, and then, when she saw it was Adam, she turned from pale to deep red. That blush made his heart beat with a new happiness. Hetty had never blushed at seeing him before.

"I frightened you," he said, with a delicious sense that it didn't signify what he said, since Hetty seemed to feel as much as he did; "let *me* pick the currants up."

That was soon done, for they had only fallen in a tangled mass on the grass-plot, and Adam, as he rose and gave her the basin again, looked straight into her eyes with the subdued tenderness that belongs to the first moments of hopeful love.

Hetty did not turn away her eyes; her blush had subsided, and she met his glance with a quiet sadness, which contented Adam, because it was so unlike anything he had seen in her before.

"There's not many more currants to get," she said; "I shall soon ha' done now."

"I'll help you," said Adam; and he fetched the large basket which was nearly full of currants, and set it close to them.

Not a word more was spoken as they gathered the currants. Adam's heart was too full to speak, and he thought Hetty knew all that was in it. She was not indifferent to his presence after all; she had blushed when she saw him, and then there was that touch of sadness about her which must surely mean love, since it was the opposite of her usual manner, which had often impressed him as indifference. And he could glance at her continually as she bent over the fruit, while the level evening sunbeams stole through the thick apple-tree boughs, and rested on her round cheek and neck as if they too were in love with her. It was to Adam the time that a man can least forget in after-life, — the time when he believes that the first woman he has ever loved betrays by a slight something — a word, a tone, a glance, the quivering of a lip or an eyelid — that she is at least beginning to love him in return. The sign is so slight, it is scarcely perceptible to the ear or eye — he could describe it to no one — it is a mere feather-touch, yet it seems to have changed his whole being, to have merged an uneasy yearning into a delicious unconsciousness of everything but the present moment. So much of our early gladness vanishes utterly from our memory: we can never recall

the joy with which we laid our heads on our mother's bosom or rode on our father's back in childhood; doubtless that joy is wrought up into our nature, as the sunlight of long-past mornings is wrought up in the soft mellowness of the apricot; but it is gone forever from our imagination, and we can only *believe* in the joy of childhood. But the first glad moment in our first love is a vision which returns to us to the last, and brings with it a thrill of feeling intense and special as the recurrent sensation of a sweet odor breathed in a far-off hour of happiness. It is a memory that gives a more exquisite touch to tenderness, that feeds the madness of jealousy, and adds the last keenness to the agony of despair.

Hetty bending over the red bunches, the level rays piercing the screen of apple-tree boughs, the length of bushy garden beyond, his own emotion as he looked at her and believed that she was thinking of him, and that there was no need for them to talk — Adam remembered it all to the last moment of his life.

And Hetty? You know quite well that Adam was mistaken about her. Like many other men, he thought the signs of love for another were signs of love towards himself. When Adam was approaching unseen by her, she was absorbed as usual in thinking and wondering about Arthur's possible return: the sound of any man's footstep would have affected her just in the same way — she would have *felt* it might be Arthur before she had time to see, and the blood that forsook her cheek in the agitation of that momentary feeling would have rushed back again at the sight of any one else just as much as at the sight of Adam. He was not wrong in thinking that a change had come over Hetty: the anxieties and fears of a first passion, with which she was trembling, had become stronger than vanity, had given her for the first time that sense of helpless dependence on another's feeling which awakens the clinging deprecating womanhood even in the shallowest girl that can ever experience it, and creates in her a sensibility to kindness which found her quite hard before. For the first time Hetty felt that there was something soothing to her in Adam's timid yet manly tenderness: she wanted to be treated lovingly — oh, it was very hard to bear this blank of absence, silence, apparent indifference, after those moments of glowing love! She was not afraid that Adam would tease her with love-making and flattering speeches like her other admirers: he had always been so reserved to her: she could enjoy without any fear the sense that this strong

brave man loved her and was near her. It never entered into her mind that Adam was pitiable too — that Adam, too, must suffer one day.

Hetty, we know, was not the first woman that had behaved more gently to the man who loved her in vain, because she had herself begun to love another. It was a very old story; but Adam knew nothing about it, so he drank in the sweet delusion.

"That'll do," said Hetty, after a little while. "Aunt wants me to leave some on the trees. I'll take 'em in now."

"It's very well I came to carry the basket," said Adam, "for it 'ud ha' been too heavy for your little arms."

"No; I could ha' carried it with both hands."

"Oh, I dare say," said Adam, smiling, "and been as long getting into the house as a little ant carrying a caterpillar. Have you ever seen those tiny fellows carrying things four times as big as themselves?"

"No," said Hetty, indifferently, not caring to know the difficulties of ant-life.

"Oh, I used to watch 'em often when I was a lad. But now, you see, I can carry the basket with one arm, as if it was an empty nutshell, and give you th' other arm to lean on. Won't you? Such big arms as mine were made for little arms like yours to lean on."

Hetty smiled faintly, and put her arm within his. Adam looked down at her, but her eyes were turned dreamily towards another corner of the garden.

"Have you ever been to Eagledale?" she said, as they walked slowly along.

"Yes," said Adam, pleased to have her ask a question about himself; "ten years ago, when I was a lad, I went with father to see about some work there. It's a wonderful sight — rocks and caves such as you never saw in your life. I never had a right notion o' rocks till I went there."

"How long did it take to get there?"

"Why, it took us the best part o' two days' walking. But it's nothing of a day's journey for anybody as has got a first-rate nag. The Captain 'ud get there in nine or ten hours, I'll be bound, he's such a rider. And I shouldn't wonder if he's back again to-morrow; he's too active to rest long in that lonely place, all by himself, for there's nothing but a bit of an inn i' that part where he's gone to fish. I wish he'd got th' estate in his hands; that 'ud be the right thing for him,

for it 'ud give him plenty to do, and he'd do't well too, for all he's so young; he's got better notions o' things than many a man twice his age. He spoke very handsome to me th' other day about lending me money to set up i' business; and if things came round that way, I'd rather be beholding to him nor to any man i' the world."

Poor Adam was led on to speak about Arthur because he thought Hetty would be pleased to know that the young squire was so ready to befriend him; the fact entered into his future prospects, which he would like to seem promising in her eyes. And it was true that Hetty listened with an interest which brought a new light into her eyes and a half smile upon her lips.

"How pretty the roses are now!" Adam continued, pausing to look at them. "See! I stole the prettiest, but I didna mean to keep it myself. I think these as are all pink, and have got a finer sort o' green leaves, are prettier than the striped uns, don't you?"

He set down the basket, and took the rose from his button-hole.

"It smells very sweet," he said; "those striped uns have no smell. Stick it in your frock, and then you can put it in water after. It 'ud be a pity to let it fade."

Hetty took the rose, smiling as she did so at the pleasant thought that Arthur could so soon get back if he liked. There was a flash of hope and happiness in her mind, and with a sudden impulse of gayety she did what she had very often done before — stuck the rose in her hair a little above the left ear. The tender admiration in Adam's face was slightly shadowed by reluctant disapproval. Hetty's love of finery was just the thing that would most provoke his mother, and he himself disliked it as much as it was possible for him to dislike anything that belonged to her.

"Ah," he said, "that's like the ladies in the pictures at the Chase; they've mostly got flowers or feathers or gold things i' their hair, but somehow I don't like to see 'em: they allays put me i' mind o' the painted women outside the shows at Treddles' on fair. What can a woman have to set her off better than her own hair, when it curls so, like yours? If a woman's young and pretty, I think you can see her good looks all the better for her being plain dressed. Why, Dinah Morris looks very nice, for all she wears such a plain cap and gown. It seems to me as a woman's face doesna want flowers; it's almost like a flower itself. I'm sure yours is."

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"Oh, very well," said Hetty, with a little playful pout, taking the rose out of her hair. "I'll put one o' Dinah's caps on when we go in, and you'll see if I look better in it. She left one behind, so I can take the pattern."

"Nay, nay, I don't want you to wear a Methodist cap like Dinah's. I dare say it's a very ugly cap, and I used to think when I saw her here, as it was nonsense for her to dress different t' other people; but I never rightly noticed her till she came to see mother last week, and then I thought the cap seemed to fit her face somehow as th' acorn-cup fits th' acorn, and I shouldn't like to see her so well without it. But you've got another sort o' face; I'd have you just as you are now, without anything t' interfere with your own looks. It's like when a man's singing a good tune, you don't want t' hear bells tinkling and interfering wi' the sound."

He took her arm and put it within his again, looking down on her fondly. He was afraid she should think he had lectured her; imagining, as we are apt to do, that she had perceived all the thoughts he had only half expressed. And the thing he dreaded most was lest any cloud should come over this evening's happiness. For the world he would not have spoken of his love to Hetty yet, till this commencing kindness towards him should have grown into unmistakable love. In his imagination he saw long years of his future life stretching before him, blest with the right to call Hetty his own: he could be content with very little at present. So he took up the basket of currants once more, and they went on towards the house.

The scene had quite changed in the half-hour that Adam had been in the garden. The yard was full of life now: Marty was letting the screaming geese through the gate, and wickedly provoking the gander by hissing at him; the granary-door was groaning on its hinges as Alick shut it, after dealing out the corn; the horses were being led out to watering, amidst much barking of all the three dogs, and many "whups" from Tim the ploughman, as if the heavy animals who held down their meek, intelligent heads, and lifted their shaggy feet so deliberately, were likely to rush wildly in every direction but the right. Everybody was come back from the meadow; and when Hetty and Adam entered the house-place, Mr. Poyser was seated in the three-cornered chair, and the grandfather in the large arm-chair opposite, looking on with pleasant expectation while the supper was being laid on the oak table. Mrs. Poyser had laid the cloth herself—a cloth made of

homespun linen, with a shining checkered pattern on it, and of an agreeable whitey-brown hue, such as all sensible housewives like to see — none of your bleached “shop-rag” that would wear into holes in no time, but good homespun that would last for two generations. The cold veal, the fresh lettuces, and the stuffed chine, might well look tempting to hungry men who had dined at half-past twelve o’clock. On the large deal table against the wall there were bright pewter plates and spoons and cans, ready for Alick and his companions; for the master and servants ate their supper not far off each other; which was all the pleasanter, because if a remark about to-morrow morning’s work occurred to Mr. Poyser, Alick was at hand to hear it.

“Well, Adam, I’m glad to see ye,” said Mr. Poyser. “What! ye’ve been helping Hetty to gether the currauns, eh? Come, sit ye down, sit ye down. Why, it’s pretty near a three-week since y’ had your supper with us; and the missis has got one of her rare stuffed chinees. I’m glad ye’re come.”

“Hetty,” said Mrs. Poyser, as she looked into the basket of currants to see if the fruit was fine, “run up-stairs, and send Molly down. She’s putting Totty to bed, and I want her to draw th’ ale, for Nancy’s busy yet i’ the dairy. You can see to the child. But whatever did you let her run away from you along wi’ Tommy for, and stuff herself wi’ fruit as she can’t eat a bit o’ good victual?”

This was said in a lower tone than usual, while her husband was talking to Adam; for Mrs. Poyser was strict in adherence to her own rules of propriety, and she considered that a young girl was not to be treated sharply in the presence of a respectable man who was courting her. That would not be fair-play: every woman was young in her turn, and had her chances of matrimony, which it was a point of honor for other women not to spoil — just as one market-woman who has sold her own eggs must not try to balk another of a customer.

Hetty made haste to run away up-stairs, not easily finding an answer to her aunt’s question, and Mrs. Poyser went out to see after Marty and Tommy, and bring them in to supper.

Soon they were all seated — the two rosy lads, one on each side, by the pale mother, a place being left for Hetty between Adam and her uncle. Alick too was come in, and was seated in his far corner, eating cold broad beans out of a large dish with his pocket-knife, and fluting a flavor in them which he would not have exchanged for the finest pine-apple.

“What a time that gell is drawing th’ ale, to be sure!”



said Mrs. Poyser, when she was dispensing her slices of stuffed chine. "I think she sets the jug under and forgets to turn the tap, as there's nothing you can't believe o' them wenches: they'll set the empty kettle o' the fire, and then come an hour after to see if the water boils."

"She's drawin' for the men too," said Mr. Poyser. "Thee shouldst ha' told her to bring our jug up first."

"Told her?" said Mrs. Poyser: "yes, I might spend all the wind i' my body, an' take the bellows too, if I was to tell them gells everything as their own sharpness wonna tell 'em. Mr. Bede, will you take some vinegar with your lettuce? Ay, you're i' the right not. It spoils the flavor o' the chine, to my thinking. It's poor eating where the flavor o' the meat lies i' the cruet. There's folks as make bad butter, and trusten to the salt t' hide it."

Mrs. Poyser's attention was here diverted by the appearance of Molly, carrying a large jug, two small mugs, and four drinking-cans, all full of ale or small beer — an interesting example of the prehensile power possessed by the human hand. Poor Molly's mouth was rather wider open than usual, as she walked along with her eyes fixed on the double cluster of vessels in her hands, quite innocent of the expression in her mistress's eye.

"Molly, I niver knew your equils — to think o' your poor mother as is a widow, an' I took you wi' as good as no character, an' the times an' times I've told you" . . .

Molly had not seen the lightning, and the thunder shook her nerves the more for the want of that preparation. With a vague alarmed sense that she must somehow comport herself differently, she hastened her step a little towards the far deal table, where she might set down her cans — caught her foot in her apron, which had become untied, and fell with a crash and a splash into a pool of beer; whereupon a titting explosion from Marty and Tommy, and a serious "Ello!" from Mr. Poyser, who saw his draught of ale unpleasantly deferred.

"There you go!" resumed Mrs. Poyser, in a cutting tone, as she rose and went towards the cupboard while Molly began dolefully to pick up the fragments of pottery. "It's what I told you 'ud come, over and over again; and there's your month's wage gone, and more, to pay for that jug as I've had i' the house this ten year, and nothing ever happened to 't before; but the crockery you've broke sin' here in th' house you've been 'ud make a parson swear — God forgi' me for saying so; an' if it had been boiling wort out o' the copper, it 'ud

ha' been the same, and you'd ha' been scalded, and very like lamed for life, as there's no knowing but what you will be some day if you go on; for anybody 'ud think you'd got the St. Vitus's Dance, to see the things you've throwed down. It's a pity but what the bits was stacked up for you to see, though it's neither seeing nor hearing as 'ull make much odds to you—anybody 'ud think you war case-hardened."

Poor Molly's tears were dropping fast by this time, and in her desperation at the lively movement of the beer-stream towards Alick's legs, she was converting her apron into a mop, while Mrs. Poyser, opening the cupboard, turned a blighting eye upon her.

"Ah," she went on, "you'll do no good wi' crying an' making more wet to wipe up. It's all your own wilfulness, as I tell you, for there's nobody no call to break anything if they'll only go the right way to work. But wooden folks had need ha' wooden things t'handle. And here must I take the brown-and-white jug, as it's niver been used three times this year, and go down i' the cellar myself, and belike catch my death, and be laid up wi' inflammation" . . .

Mrs. Poyser had turned round from the cupboard with the brown-and-white jug in her hand, when she caught sight of *something at the other end of the kitchen*; perhaps it was because she was already trembling and nervous that the apparition had so strong an effect on her; perhaps jug-breaking, like other crimes, has a contagious influence. However it was, she stared and started like a ghost-seer, and the precious brown-and-white jug fell to the ground, parting forever with its spout and handle.

"Did ever anybody see the like?" she said, with a suddenly-lowered tone, after a moment's bewildered glance round the room. "The jugs are bewitched, I think. It's them nasty glazed handles—they slip o'er the finger like a snail."

"Why, thee'st let thy own whip fly i' thy face," said her husband, who had now joined in the laugh of the young ones.

"It's all very fine to look on and grin," rejoined Mrs. Poyser; "but there's times when the crockery seems alive, an' flies out o' your hand like a bird. It's like the glass, sometimes, 'ull crack as it stands. What is to be broke *will* be broke, for I never dropped a thing i' my life for want o' holding it, else I should never ha' kept the crockery all these 'ears as I bought at my own wedding. And Hetty, are you mad? Whativer do you mean by coming down i' that way,

and making one think as there's a ghost a-walking i' th' house?"

A new outbreak of laughter, while Mrs. Poyser was speaking, was caused, less by her sudden conversion to a fatalistic view of jug-breaking, than by that strange appearance of Hetty, which had startled her aunt. The little minx had found a black gown of her aunt's, and pinned it close round her neck to look like Dinah's, had made her hair as flat as she could, and had tied on one of Dinah's high-crowned borderless net-caps. The thought of Dinah's pale grave face and mild gray eyes, which the sight of the gown and cap brought with it, made it a laughable surprise enough to see them replaced by Hetty's round rosy cheeks and coquettish dark eyes. The boys got off their chairs and jumped round her, clapping their hands, and even Alick gave a low ventral laugh as he looked up from his beans. Under cover of the noise, Mrs. Poyser went into the back kitchen to send Nancy into the cellar with the great pewter measure, which had some chance of being free from bewitchment.

"Why, Hetty, lass, are ye turned Methodist?" said Mr. Poyser, with that comfortable slow enjoyment of a laugh which one only sees in stout people. "You must pull your face a deal longer before you'll do for one; mustna she, Adam? How come you to put them things on, eh?"

"Adam said he liked Dinah's cap and gown better nor my clothes," said Hetty, sitting down demurely. "He says folks look better in ugly clothes."

"Nay, nay," said Adam, looking at her admiringly; "I only said they seemed to suit Dinah. But if I'd said you'd look pretty in 'em, I should ha' said nothing but what was true."

"Why, thee thought'st Hetty war a ghost, didstna?" said Mr. Poyser to his wife, who now came back and took her seat again. "Thee look'dst as scared as scared."

"It little sinnifies how I looked," said Mrs. Poyser; "looks 'ull mend no jugs, nor laughing neither, as I see. Mr. Bede, I'm sorry you've to wait so long for your ale, but it's coming in a minute. Make yourself at home wi' th' cold potatoes: I know you like 'em. Tommy, I'll send you to bed this minute, if you don't give over laughing. What is there to laugh at, I should like to know? I'd sooner cry nor laugh at the sight o' that poor thing's cap; and there's them as 'ud be better if they could make theirselves like her i' more ways nor putting on her cap. It little becomes anybody i' this house to make fun o' my sister's child, an' her just gone away

from us, as it went to my heart to part wi' her: au' I know one thing, as if trouble was to come, an' I was to be laid up i' my bed, an' the children was to die — as there's no knowing but what they will — an' the murrain was to come among the cattle again, an' everything went to rack an' ruin — I say we might be glad to get sight o' Dinah's cap again, wi' her own face under it, border or no border. For she's one o' them things as looks the brightest on a rainy day, and loves you the best when you're most i' need on't."

Mrs. Poyser, you perceive, was aware that nothing would be so likely to expel the comic as the terrible. Tommy, who was of a susceptible disposition, and very fond of his mother, and who had, besides, eaten so many cherries as to have his feelings less under command than usual, was so affected by the dreadful picture she had made of the possible future, that he began to cry; and the good-natured father, indulgent to all weaknesses but those of negligent farmers, said to Hetty, —

"You'd better take the things off again, my lass; it hurts your aunt to see 'em."

Hetty went up-stairs again, and the arrival of the ale made an agreeable diversion; for Adam had to give his opinion of the new tap, which could not be otherwise than complimentary to Mrs. Poyser; and then followed a discussion on the secrets of good brewing, the folly of stinginess in "hopping," and the doubtful economy of a farmer's making his own malt. Mrs. Poyser had so many opportunities of expressing herself with weight on these subjects, that by the time supper was ended, the ale-jug refilled, and Mr. Poyser's pipe alight, she was once more in high good-humor, and ready, at Adam's request, to fetch the broken spinning-wheel for his inspection.

"Ah," said Adam, looking at it carefully, "here's a nice bit o' turning wanted. It's a pretty wheel. I must have it up at the turning-shop in the village, and do it there, for I've no convenience for turning at home. If you'll send it to Mr. Burge's shop i' the morning, I'll get it done for you by Wednesday. I've been turning it over in my mind," he continued looking at Mr. Poyser, "to make a bit more convenience at home for nice jobs o' cabinet-making. I've always done a deal at such little things in odd hours, and they're profitable, for there's more workmanship nor material in 'em. I look for me and Seth to get a little business for ourselves i' that way, for I know a man at Rosseter as 'ull take as many things as we should make, besides what we could get orders for round about."

Mr. Poyser entered with interest into a project which seemed a step towards Adam's becoming a "master-man;" and Mrs. Poyser gave her approbation to the scheme of the movable kitchen cupboard, which was to be capable of containing grocery, pickles, crockery, and house-linen, in the utmost compactness, without confusion. Hetty, once more in her own dress, with her neckerchief pushed a little backwards on this warm evening, was seated picking currants near the window, where Adam could see her quite well. And so the time passed pleasantly till Adam got up to go. He was pressed to come again soon, but not to stay longer, for at this busy time sensible people would not run the risk of being sleepy at five o'clock in the morning.

"I shall take a step farther," said Adam, "and go on to see Mester Massey, for he wasn't at church yesterday, and I've not seen him for a week past. I've never hardly known him to miss church before."

"Ay," said Mr. Poyser, "we've heared nothing about him, for it's the boys' hollodays now, so we can give you no account."

"But you'll niver think o' going there at this hour o' the night?" said Mrs. Poyser, folding up her knitting.

"Oh, Mester Massey sits up late," said Adam. "An' the night-school's not over yet. Some o' the men don't come till late—they've got so far to walk. And Bartle himself's never in bed till it's gone eleven."

"I wouldna have him to live wi' me, then," said Mrs. Poyser, "a-dropping oandle-grease about, as you're like to tumble down o' the floor the first thing i' the morning."

"Ay, eleven o'clock's late—it's late," said old Martin. "I ne'er sot up so i' *my* life, not to say as it warn a marr'in', or a christenin', or a wake, or th' harvest supper. Eleven o'clock's late."

"Why, I sit up till after twelve often," said Adam, laughing, "but it isn't t' eat and drink extry, it's to work extry. Good-night, Mrs. Poyser; good-night, Hetty."

Hetty could only smile and not shake hands, for hers were dyed and damp with currant-juice; but all the rest gave a hearty shake to the large palm that was held out to them, and said, "Come again, come again!"

"Ay, think o' that now," said Mr. Poyser, when Adam was out on the causeway. "Sitting up till past twelve to do extry work! Ye'll not find many men o' six-an'-twenty as 'ull do to put i' the shafts wi' him. If you can catch Adam for a hus-

band, Hetty, you'll ride i' your own spring-cart some day, I'll be your warrant."

Hetty was moving across the kitchen with the currants, so her uncle did not see the little toss of the head with which she answered him. To ride in a spring-cart seemed a very miserable lot indeed to her now.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE NIGHT SCHOOL AND THE SCHOOLMASTER.

BARTLE MASSEY'S was one of a few scattered houses on the edge of a common, which was divided by the road to Treddleston. Adam reached it in a quarter of an hour after leaving the Hall Farm; and when he had his hand on the door-latch, he could see, through the curtainless window, that there were eight or nine heads bending over the desks, lighted by thin dips.

When he entered, a reading lesson was going forward, and Bartle Massey merely nodded, leaving him to take his place where he pleased. He had not come for the sake of a lesson to-night, and his mind was too full of personal matters, too full of the last two hours he had passed in Hetty's presence, for him to amuse himself with a book till school was over; so he sat down in a corner, and looked on with an absent mind. It was a sort of scene which Adam had beheld almost weekly for years; he knew by heart every arabesque flourish in the framed specimen of Bartle Massey's handwriting which hung over the schoolmaster's head, by way of keeping a lofty ideal before the minds of his pupils; he knew the backs of all the books on the shelf running along the whitewashed wall above the pegs for the slates; he knew exactly how many grains were gone out of the ear of Indian-corn that hung from one of the rafters; he had long ago exhausted the resources of his imagination in trying to think how the bunch of leathery seaweed had looked and grown in its native element; and from the place where he sat, he could make nothing of the old map of England that hung against the opposite wall, for age had turned it of a fine yellow brown, something like that of a well-seasoned meerschaum. The drama that was going on was almost as familiar as the scene, nevertheless habit had

not made him indifferent to it, and even in his present self-absorbed mood, Adam felt a momentary stirring of the old fellow-feeling, as he looked at the rough men painfully holding pen or pencil with their cramped hands, or humbly laboring through their reading lesson.

The reading class now seated on the form in front of the schoolmaster's desk, consisted of the three most backward pupils. Adam would have known it, only by seeing Bartle Massey's face as he looked over his spectacles which he had shifted to the ridge of his nose, not requiring them for present purposes. The face wore its mildest expression: the grizzled bushy eyebrows had taken their more acute angle of compassionate kindness, and the mouth, habitually compressed with a pout of the lower lip, was relaxed so as to be ready to speak a helpful word or syllable in a moment. This gentle expression was the more interesting because the schoolmaster's nose, an irregular aquiline twisted a little on one side, had rather a formidable character; and his brow, moreover, had that peculiar tension which always impresses one as a sign of a keen impatient temperament: the blue veins stood out like cords under the transparent yellow skin, and this intimidating brow was softened by no tendency to baldness, for the gray bristly hair, cut down to about an inch in length, stood round it in as close ranks as ever.

"Nay, Bill, nay," Bartle was saying in a kind tone, as he nodded to Adam, "begin that again, and then perhaps, it'll come to you what d, r, y, spells. It's the same lesson you read last week, you know."

"Bill" was a sturdy fellow, aged four-and-twenty, an excellent stone-sawyer, who could get as good wages as any man in the trade of his years; but he found a reading lesson in words of one syllable a harder matter to deal with than the hardest stone he had ever had to saw. The letters, he complained, were so "uncommon alike, there was no tellin' 'em one from another," the sawyer's business not being concerned with minute differences such as exist between a letter with its tail turned up and a letter with its tail turned down. But Bill had a firm determination that he would learn to read, founded chiefly on two reasons: first, that Tom Hazelow, his cousin, could read anything "right off," whether it was print or writing, and Tom had sent him a letter from twenty miles off, saying how he was prospering in the world, and had got an overlooker's place; secondly, that Sam Phillips, who sawed with him, had learned to read when he was turned twenty; and what could be done by

a little fellow like Sam Phillips, Bill considered, could be done by himself, seeing that he could pound Sam into wet clay if circumstances required it. So here he was, pointing his big finger towards three words at once, and turning his head on one side that he might keep better hold with his eye of the one word which was to be discriminated out of the group. The amount of knowledge Bartle Massey must possess was something so dim and vast that Bill's imagination recoiled before it: he would hardly have ventured to deny that the schoolmaster might have something to do in bringing about the regular return of daylight and the changes in the weather.

The man seated next to Bill was of a very different type: he was a Methodist brickmaker, who, after spending thirty years of his life in perfect satisfaction with his ignorance, had lately "got religion," and along with it the desire to read the Bible. But with him, too, learning was a heavy business, and on his way out to-night he had offered as usual a special prayer for help, seeing that he had undertaken this hard task with a single eye to the nourishment of his soul—that he might have a greater abundance of texts and hymns wherewith to banish evil memories and the temptations of old habit; or, in brief language, the devil. For the brickmaker had been a notorious poacher, and was suspected, though there was no good evidence against him, of being the man who had shot a neighboring gamekeeper in the leg. However that might be, it is certain that shortly after the accident referred to, which was coincident with the arrival of an awakening Methodist preacher at Troddleston, a great change had been observed in the brickmaker; and though he was still known in the neighborhood by his old *sobriquet* of "Brimstone," there was nothing he held in so much horror as any farther transactions with that evil-smelling element. He was a broad-chested fellow, with a fervid temperament, which helped him better in imbibing religious ideas than in the dry process of acquiring the mere human knowledge of the alphabet. Indeed, he had been already a little shaken in his resolution by a brother Methodist, who assured him that the letter was a mere obstruction to the Spirit, and expressed a fear that Brimstone was too eager for the knowledge that puffeth up.

The third beginner was a much more promising pupil. He was a tall but thin and wiry man, nearly as old as Brimstone, with a very pale face, and hands stained a deep blue. He was a dyer, who in the course of dipping homespun wool and



old women's petticoats, had got fired with the ambition to learn a great deal more about the strange secrets of color. He had already a high reputation in the district for his dyes, and he was bent on discovering some method by which he could reduce the expense of crimsons and scarlets. The druggist at Treddleston had given him a notion that he might save himself a great deal of labor and expense if he could learn to read, and so he had begun to give his spare hours to the night-school, resolving that his "little chap" should lose no time in coming to Mr. Massey's day-school as soon as he was old enough.

It was touching to see these three big men, with the marks of their hard labor about them, anxiously bending over the worn books, and painfully making out, "The grass is green," "The sticks are dry," "The corn is ripe"—a very hard lesson to pass to after columns of single words all alike except in the first letter. It was almost as if three rough animals were making humble efforts to learn how they might become human. And it touched the tenderest fibre in Bartle Massey's nature, for such full-grown children as these were the only pupils for whom he had no severe epithets, and no impatient tones. He was not gifted with an imperturbable temper, and on music-nights it was apparent that patience could never be an easy virtue to him; but this evening, as he glanced over his spectacles at Bill Downes, the sawyer, who is turning his head on one side with a desperate sense of blankness before the letters d, v, y, his eyes shed their mildest and most encouraging light.

After the reading class, two youths, between sixteen and nineteen, came up with imaginary bills of parcels, which they had been writing out on their slates, and were now required to calculate "offhand"—a test which they stood with such imperfect success that Bartle Massey, whose eyes had been glaring at them ominously through his spectacles for some minutes, at length burst out in a bitter, high-pitched tone, pausing between every sentence to rap the floor with a knobbed stick which rested between his legs.

"Now, you see, you don't do this thing a bit better than you did a fortnight ago; and I'll tell you what's the reason. You want to learn accounts; that's well and good. But you think all you need do to learn accounts is to come to me and do sums for an hour or so, two or three times a-week; and no sooner do you get your caps on and turn out of doors again, than you sweep the whole thing clean out of your

mind. You go whistling about, and take no more care what you're thinking of than if your heads were gutters for any rubbish to swill through that happened to be in the way; and if you get a good notion in 'em, it's pretty soon washed out again. You think knowledge is to be got cheap—you'll come and pay Bartle Massey sixpence a-week, and he'll make you clever at figures without your taking any trouble. But knowledge isn't to be got with paying sixpence, let me tell you: if you're to know figures, you must turn 'em over in your heads, and keep your thoughts fixed on 'em. There's nothing you can't turn into a sun, for there's nothing but what's got number in it—even a fool. You may say to yourselves, 'I'm one fool, and Jack's another; if my fool's head weighed four pound, and Jack's three pound three ounces and three quarters, how many pennyweights heavier would my head be than Jack's?' A man that had got his heart in learning figures would make sums for himself, and work 'em in his head: when he sat at his shoemaking, he'd count his stitches by fives, and then put a price on his stitches, say half a farthing, and then see how much money he could get in an hour; and then ask himself how much money he'd get in a day at that rate; and then how much ten workmen would get working three, or twenty, or a hundred years at that rate—and all the while his needle would be going just as fast as if he left his head empty for the devil to dance in. But the long and the short of it is—I'll have nobody in my night-school that doesn't strive to learn what he comes to learn, as hard as if he was striving to get out of a dark hole into broad daylight. I'll send no man away because he's stupid; if Billy Taft, the idiot, wanted to learn anything, I'd not refuse to teach him. But I'll not throw away good knowledge on people who think they can get it by the sixpenn'orth, and carry it away with 'em as they would an ounce of snuff. So never come to me again, if you can't show that you've been working with your own heads, instead of thinking you can pay for mine to work for you. That's the last word I've got to say to you."

With this final sentence, Bartle Massey gave a sharper rap than ever with his knobbed stick, and the discomfited lads got up to go with a sulky look. The other pupils had happily only their writing-books to show, in various stages of progress from pot-hooks to round text; and mere pen-strokes, however perverse, were less exasperating to Bartle than false arithmetic. He was a little more severe than usual on Jacob Storey's Z's,

of which poor Jacob had written a pageful, all with their tops turned the wrong way, with a puzzled sense that they were not right "somehow." But he observed in apology, that it was a letter you never wanted hardly, and he thought it had only been put there "to finish off th' alphabet, like, though ampus-and (&) would ha' done as well, for what he could see."

At last the pupils had all taken their hats and said their "Good-nights," and Adam, knowing his old master's habits, rose and said, "Shall I put the candles out, Mr. Massey?"

"Yes, my boy, yes, all but this, which I'll carry into the house; and just look the outer door, now you're near it," said Bartle, getting his stick in the fitting angle to help him in descending from his stool. He was no sooner on the ground than it became obvious why the stick was necessary — the left leg was much shorter than the right. But the schoolmaster was so active with his lameness, that it was hardly thought of as a misfortune; and if you had seen him make his way along the schoolroom floor, and up the step into his kitchen, you would perhaps have understood why the naughty boys sometimes felt that his pace might be indefinitely quickened, and that he and his stick might overtake them even in their swift-est run.

The moment he appeared at the kitchen door with the candle in his hand, a faint whimpering began in the chimney-corner, and a brown-and-tan-colored bitch, of that wise-looking breed with short legs and long body, known to an unmechanical generation as turnspits, came creeping along the floor, wagging her tail, and hesitating at every other step, as if her affections were painfully divided between the hamper in the chimney-corner and the master, whom she could not leave without a greeting.

"Well, Vixen, well then, how are the babbies?" said the schoolmaster, making haste towards the chimney-corner, and holding the candle over the low hamper, where two extremely blind puppies lifted up their heads towards the light, from a nest of flannel and wool. Vixen could not even see her master look at them without painful excitement: she got into the hamper and got out again the next moment, and behaved with true feminine folly, though looking all the while as wise as a dwarf with a large old-fashioned head and body on the most abbreviated legs.

"Why, you've got a family, I see, Mr. Massey?" said Adam, smiling, as he came into the kitchen. "How's that? I thought it was against the law here."

"Law? What's the use o' law when a man's once such a fool as to let a woman into his house?" said Bartle, turning away from the hamper with some bitterness. He always called Vixen a woman, and seemed to have lost all consciousness that he was using a figure of speech. "If I'd known Vixen was a woman, I'd never have held the boys from drowning her; but when I'd got her into my hand, I was forced to take to her. And now you see what she's brought me to — the sly, hypocritical wench" — Bartle spoke these last words in a rasping tone of reproach, and looked at Vixen, who poked down her head and turned up her eyes towards him with a keen sense of opprobrium — "and contrived to be brought to bed on a Sunday at church-time. I've wished again and again I'd been a bloody-minded man, that I could have strangled the mother and the brats with one cord."

"I'm glad it was no worse a cause kept you from church," said Adam. "I was afraid you must be ill for the first time i' your life. And I was particular sorry not to have you at church yesterday."

"Ah, my boy, I know why, I know why," said Bartle, kindly, going up to Adam, and raising his hand up to the shoulder that was almost on a level with his own head. "You've had a rough bit o' road to get over since I saw you — a rough bit o' road. But I'm in hopes there are better times coming for you. I've got some news to tell you. But I must get my supper first, for I'm hungry, I'm hungry. Sit down, sit down."

Bartle went into his little pantry, and brought out an excellent home-baked loaf; for it was his one extravagance in these dear times to eat bread once a-day instead of oat-cake; and he justified it by observing, that what a schoolmaster wanted was brains, and oat-cake ran too much to bone instead of brains. Then came a piece of cheese and a quart jug with a crown of foam upon it. He placed them all on the round deal table which stood against his large arm-chair in the chimney-corner, with Vixen's hamper on one side of it, and a window-shelf with a few books piled up in it on the other. The table was as clean as if Vixen had been an excellent housewife in a checkered apron; so was the quarry floor; and the old carved oaken press, table, and chairs, which in these days would be bought at a high price in aristocratic houses, though, in that period of spider-legs and inlaid cupids, Bartle had got them for an old song, were as free from dust as things could be at the end of a summer's day.

"Now, then, my boy, draw up, draw up. We'll not talk about business till we've had our supper. No man can be wise on an empty stomach. But," said Bartle, rising from his chair again, "I must give Vixen her supper too, confound her! though she'll do nothing with it but nourish those unnecessary habbies. That's the way with these women, they've got no head-pieces to nourish, and so their food all runs either to fat or to brats."

He brought out of the pantry a dish of scraps, which Vixen at once fixed her eyes on, and jumped out of her hamper to lick up with the utmost despatch.

"I've had my supper, Mr. Massey," said Adam, "so I'll look on while you eat yours. I've been at the Hall Farm, and they always have their supper betimes, you know: they don't keep your late hours."

"I know little about their hours," said Bartle, dryly, cutting his bread and not shrinking from the crust. "It's a house I seldom go into, though I'm fond of the boys, and Martin Poyser's a good fellow. There's too many women in the house for me: I hate the sound of women's voices; they're always either a-buzz or a-squeak — always either a-buzz or a-squeak. Mrs. Poyser keeps at the top o' the talk like a fife; and as for the young lasses, I'd as soon look at water-grubs — I know what they'll turn to — stinging gnats, stinging gnats. Here, take some ale, my boy: it's been drawn for you — it's been drawn for you."

"Nay, Mr. Massey," said Adam, who took his old friend's whim more seriously than usual to-night, "don't be so hard on the creaturs God has made to be companions for us. A working man 'ud be badly off without a wife to see to th' house and the victual, and make things clean and comfortable."

"Nonsense! It's the silliest lie a sensible man like you ever believed, to say a woman makes a house comfortable. It's a story got up, because the women are there, and something must be found for 'em to do. I tell you there isn't a thing under the sun that needs to be done at all, but what a man can do better than a woman, unless it's bearing children, and they do that in a poor make-shift way; it had better ha' been left to the men — it had better ha' been left to the men. I tell you, a woman 'ull bake you a pie every week of her life, and never come to see that the hotter th' oven the shorter the time. I tell you, a woman 'ull make your porridge every day for twenty years, and never think of measuring the proportion between the meal and the milk — a little

more or less, she'll think, doesn't signify: the porridge *will* be awk'ard now and then: if it's wrong, it's summat in the meal, or it's summat in the milk, or it's summat in the water. Look at me! I make my own bread, and there's no difference between one batch and another from year's end to year's end; but if I'd got any other woman besides Vixen in the house, I must pray to the Lord every baking to give me patience if the bread turned out heavy. And as for cleanliness, my house is cleaner than any other house on the Common, though the half of 'em swarm with women. Will Baker's lad comes to help me in a morning, and we get as much cleaning done in one hour without any fuss, as a woman 'ud get done in three, and all the while be sending buckets o' water after your ankles, and let the fender and the fire-irons stand in the middle o' the floor half the day, for you to break your shins against 'em. Don't tell me about God having made such creatures to be companions for us! I don't say but He might make Eve to be a companion to Adam in Paradise — there was no cooking to be spoilt there, and no other woman to cackle with and make mischief; though you see what mischief she did as soon as she'd an opportunity. But it's an impious, unscriptural opinion to say a woman's a blessing to a man now; you might as well say adders and wasps and foxes and wild beasts, are a blessing, when they're only the evils that belong to this state o' probation, which it's lawful for a man to keep as clear of as he can in this life, hoping to get quit of 'em forever in another — hoping to get quit of 'em forever in another."

Bartle had become so excited and angry in the course of his invective that he had forgotten his supper, and only used the knife for the purpose of rapping the table with the haft. But towards the close, the raps became so sharp and frequent, and his voice so quarrelsome, that Vixen felt it incumbent on her to jump out of the hamper and bark vaguely.

"Quiet, Vixen!" snarled Bartle, turning round upon her. "You're like the rest o' the women — always putting in *your* word before you know why."

Vixen returned to her hamper again in humiliation, and her master continued his supper in a silence which Adam did not choose to interrupt; he knew the old man would be in a better humor when he had had his supper and lighted his pipe. Adam was used to hear him talk in this way, but had never learned so much of Bartle's past life as to know whether his view of married comfort was founded on experience. On

that point Bartle was mute; and it was even a secret where he had lived previous to the twenty years in which, happily for the peasants and artisans of this neighborhood, he had been settled among them as their only schoolmaster. If anything like a question was ventured on this subject, Bartle always replied, "Oh, I've seen many places—I've been a deal in the south"—and the Loamshire men would as soon have thought of asking for a particular town or village in Africa as in "the south."

"Now then, my boy," said Bartle, at last, when he had poured out his second mug of ale and lighted his pipe—"now then, we'll have a little talk. Bnt tell me first, have you heard any particular news to-day?"

"No," said Adam, "not as I remember."

"Ah, they'll keep it close, they'll keep it close, I dare say. But I found it out by chance; and it's news that may concern you, Adam, else I'm a man that don't know a superficial square foot from a solid."

Here Bartle gave a series of fierce and rapid puffs, looking earnestly the while at Adam. Your impatient loquacious man has never any notion of keeping his pipe alight by gentle measured puffs; he is always letting it go nearly out, and then punishing it for that negligence. At last he said—

"Satchell's got a paralytic stroke. I found it out from the lad they sent to Treddleston for the doctor, before seven o'clock this morning. He's a good way beyond sixty, you know; it's much if he gets over it."

"Well," said Adam, "I dare say there'd be more rejoicing than sorrow in the parish at his being laid up. He's been a selfish, tale-bearing, mischievous fellow; but, after all, there's nobody he's done so much harm to as to th' old Squire. 'Thoug' it's the Squire himself as is to blame—making a stupid fellow like that a sort o' man-of-all-work, just to save th' expense of having a proper steward to look after th' estate. And he's lost more by ill-management o' the woods, I'll be bound, than 'ud pay for two stewards. If he's laid on the shelf, it's to be hoped he'll make way for a better man, but I don't see how it's like to make any difference to me."

"But I see it, but I see it," said Bartle; "and others besides me. The Captain's coming of age now—you know that as well as I do—and it's to be expected he'll have a little more voice in things. And I know, and you know too, what 'ud be the Captain's wish about the woods, if there was a fair opportunity for making a change. He's said in plenty of

people's hearing that he'd make you manager of the woods to-morrow, if he'd the power. Why, Carroll, Mr. Irwine's butler, heard him say so to the parson not many days ago. Carroll looked in when we were smoking our pipes o' Saturday night at Casson's, and he told us about it; and whenever anybody says a word for you, the parson's ready to back it, that I'll answer for. It was pretty well talked over, I can tell you, at Casson's, and one and another had their fling at you; for if donkeys set to work to sing, you're pretty sure what the tune 'll be."

"Why, did they talk it over before Mr. Burge?" said Adam; "or wasn't he there o' Saturday?"

"Oh, he went away before Carroll came; and Casson—he's always for setting other folks right, you know—would have it Burge was the man to have the management of the woods. 'A substantial man,' says he, 'with pretty near sixty years' experience o' timber: it 'ud be all very well for Adam Bede to act under him, but it isn't to be supposed the Squire 'ud appoint a young fellow like Adam, when there's his elders and betters at hand!' But I said, 'That's a pretty notion o' yours Casson. Why, Burge is the man to *buy* timber; would you put the woods into his hands, and let him make his own bargains? I think you don't leave your customers to score their own drink, do you? And as for age, what that's worth depends on the quality o' the liquor. It's pretty well known who's the backbone of Jonathan Burge's business.'"

"I thank you for your good word, Mr. Massey," said Adam. "But, for all that, Casson was partly i' the right for once. There's not much likelihood that th' old Squire 'ud ever consent t' employ me: I offended him about two years ago, and he's never forgiven me."

"Why, how was that? You never told me about it," said Bartle.

"Oh, it was a bit o' nonsense. I'd made a frame for a screen for Miss Lyddy—she's allays making something with her worsted-work, you know—and she'd given me particular orders about this screen, and there was as much talking and measuring as if we'd been planning a house. However, it was a nice bit o' work, and I liked doing it for her. But, you know, those little friggling things take a deal o' time. I only worked at it in over-hours—often late at night—and I had to go to Treddleston over an' over again, about little bits o' brass nails and such gear; and I turned the little knobs and the legs, and carved th' open work, after a pattern, as nice as could be. And



I was uncommon pleased with it when it was done. And when I took it home, Miss Lyddy sent for me to bring it into her drawing-room, so as she might give me directions about fastening on the work — very fine needlework, Jacob and Rachel a-kissing one another among the sheep, like a picture — and th' old Squire was sitting there, for he mostly sits with her. Well, she was mighty pleased with the screen, and then she wanted to know what pay she was to give me. I didn't speak at random — you know it's not my way; I'd calculated pretty close, though I hadn't made out a bill, and I said, One pound thirteen. That was paying for the mater'als and paying me, but none too much, for my work. Th' old Squire looked up at this, and peered in his way at the screen, and said, 'One pound thirteen for a gimcrack like that! Lydia, my dear, if you must spend money on these things, why don't you get them at Rosseter, instead of paying double price for clumsy work here? Such things are not work for a carpenter like Adam. Give him a guinea, and no more.' Well, Miss Lyddy, I reckon, believed what he told her, and she's not overfond o' parting with the money herself — she's not a bad woman at bottom, but she's been brought up under his thumb; so she began fidgeting with her purse, and turned as red as her ribbon. But I made a bow, and said, 'No thank you, madam; I'll make you a present o' the screen, if you please. I've charged the regular price for my work, and I know it's done well; and I know, begging his honor's pardon, that you couldn't get such a screen at Rosseter under two guineas. I'm willing to give you my work — it's been done in my own time, and nobody's got anything to do with it but me; but if I'm paid, I can't take a smaller price than I asked, because that 'ud be like saying, I'd asked more than was just. With your leave, madam, I'll bid you good-morning.' I made my bow and went out before she'd time to say any more, for she stood with the purse in her hand, looking almost foolish. I didn't mean to be disrespectful, and I spoke as polite as I could; but I can give in to no man, if he wants to make it out as I'm trying to overreach him. And in the evening the footman brought me the one pound thirteen wrapped in paper. But since then I've seen pretty clear as th' old Squire can't abide me."

"That's likely enough, that's likely enough," said Bartle, meditatively. "The only way to bring him round would be to show him what was for his own interest, and that the Captain may do — that the Captain may do."

"Nay, I don't know," said Adam; "the Squire's 'cute enough, but it takes something else besides 'cuteness to make folks see what'll be their interest in the long-run. It takes some conscience and belief in right and wrong, I see that pretty clear. You'd hardly ever bring round th' old Squire to believe he'd gain as much in a straightforward way as by tricks and turus. And, besides, I've not much mind to work under him: I don't want to quarrel with any gentleman, more particular an old gentleman turned eighty, and I know we couldn't agree long. If the Captain was master o' th' estate, it 'ud be different: he's got a conscience and a will to do right, and I'd sooner work for him nor for any man living."

"Well, well, my boy, if good luck knocks at your door, don't you put your head out at window and tell it to be gone about its business, that's all. You must learn to deal with odd and even in life, as well as in figures. I tell you now, as I told you ten years ago, when you pommelled young Mike Holdsworth for wanting to pass a bad shilling, before you knew whether he was in jest or earnest — you're over-hasty and proud, and apt to set your teeth against folks that don't square to your notions. It's no harm for *me* to be a bit fiery and stiff-backed: I'm an old schoolmaster, and shall never want to get on to a higher peroh. But where's the use of all the time I've spent in teaching you writing and mapping and mensuration, if you're not to get fo'ard in the world, and show folks there's some advantage in having a head on your shoulders, instead of a turnip? Do you mean to go on turning up your nose at every opportunity, because it's got a bit of a smell about it that nobody finds out but yourself? It's as foolish as that notion o' yours that a wife is to make a working man comfortable. Stuff and nonsense! — stuff and nonsense! Leave that to fools that never got beyond a sum in simple addition. Simple addition enough! Add one fool to another fool, and in six years' time six fools more — they're all of the same denomination, big and little's nothing to do with the sum!"

During this rather heated exhortation to coolness and discretion the pipe had gone out, and Bartle gave the climax to his speech by striking a light furiously, after which he puffed with fierce resolution, fixing his eye still on Adam, who was trying not to laugh.

"There's a good deal o' sense in what you say, Mr. Massey," Adam began, as soon as he felt quite serious, "as there

always is. But you'll give in that it's no business o' mine to be building on chances that may never happen. What I've got to do is to work as well as I can with the tools and mater'als I've got in my hands. If a good chance comes to me, I'll think o' what you've been saying; but till then, I've got nothing to do but to trust to my own hands and my own head-piece. I'm turning over a little plan for Seth and me to go into the cabinet-making a bit by ourselves, and win a extra pound or two in that way. But it's getting late now — it'll be pretty near eleven before I'm at home, and mother may happen to lie awake; she's more fidgety nor usual now. So I'll bid you good-night."

"Well, well, we'll go to the gate with you — it's a fine night," said Bartle, taking up his stick. Vixen was at once on her legs, and without further words the three walked out into the starlight, by the side of Bartle's potato-beds, to the little gate.

"Come to the music o' Friday night, if you can, my boy," said the old man, as he closed the gate after Adam, and leaned against it.

"Ay, ay," said Adam, striding along towards the streak of pale road. He was the only object moving on the wide common. The two gray donkeys, just visible in front of the gorse bushes, stood as still as limestone images — as still as the gray-thatched roof of the mud cottage a little farther on. Bartle kept his eye on the moving figure till it passed into the darkness, while Vixen, in a state of divided affection, had twice run back to the house to bestow a parenthetic lick on her puppies.

"Ay, ay," muttered the schoolmaster, as Adam disappeared; "there you go, stalking along — stalking along; but you wouldn't have been what you are if you hadn't had a bit of old lame Bartle inside you. The strongest calf must have something to suck at. There's plenty of these big, lumbering fellows 'ud never have known their A B C, if it hadn't been for Bartle Massey. Well, well, Vixen, yon foolish wench, what is it, what is it? I must go in, must I? Ay, ay, I'm never to have a will o' my own any more. And those pups, what do you think I'm to do with 'em, when they're twice as big as you? — for I'm pretty sure the father was that hulking bull-terrier of Will Baker's — wasn't he now, eh, you sly hussy?" (Here Vixen tucked her tail between her legs, and ran forward into the house. Subjects are sometimes broached which a well-bred female will ignore.)

"But where's the use of talking to a woman with babbies?" continued Bartle: "she's got no conscience — no conscience: it's all run to milk,"

## BOOK III.

### CHAPTER XXII.

#### GOING TO THE BIRTHDAY FEAST.

THE thirtieth of July was come, and it was one of those half-dozen warm days which sometimes occur in the middle of a rainy English summer. No rain had fallen for the last three or four days, and the weather was perfect for that time of the year: there was less dust than usual on the dark-green hedge-rows, and on the wild camomile that starred the roadside, yet the grass was dry enough for the little children to roll on it, and there was no cloud but a long dash of light, downy ripple, high, high up in the far-off blue sky. Perfect weather for an outdoor July merrymaking, yet surely not the best time of year to be born in. Nature seems to make a hot pause just then — all the loveliest flowers are gone; the sweet time of early growth and vague hopes is past; and yet the time of harvest and ingathering is not come, and we tremble at the possible storms that may ruin the precious fruit in the moment of its ripeness. The woods are all one dark monotonous green; the wagon-loads of hay no longer creep along the lanes, scattering their sweet-smelling fragments on the blackberry branches; the pastures are often a little tanned, yet the corn has not got its last splendor of red and gold; the lambs and calves have lost all traces of their innocent frisky prettiness, and have become stupid young sheep and cows. But it is a time of leisure on the farm — that pause between hay and corn harvest, and so the farmers and laborers in Hayslope and Broxton thought the Captain did well to come of age just then, when they could give their undivided minds to the flavor of the great cask of ale which had been brewed the autumn after "the heir" was born, and was to be tapped on his twenty-first birthday. The air had been merry with the ringing of church-bells very early this morning, and every one had made haste to get through the needful work before twelve, when it would be time to think of getting ready to go to the Chase.

The mid-day sun was streaming into Hetty's bed-chamber,

and there was no blind to temper the heat with which it fell on her head as she looked at herself in the old specked glass. Still, that was the only glass she had in which she could see her neck and arms, for the small hanging glass she had fetched out of the next room—the room that had been Dinah's—would show her nothing below her little chin, and that beautiful bit of neck where the roundness of her cheek melted into another roundness shadowed by dark delicate curls. And to-day she thought more than usual about her neck and arms; for at the dance this evening she was not to wear any neckerchief, and she had been busy yesterday with her spotted pink-and-white frock, that she might make the sleeves either long or short at will. She was dressed now just as she was to be in the evening, with a tucker made of "real" lace, which her aunt had lent her for this unparalleled occasion, but with no ornaments besides; she had even taken out her small round ear-rings which she wore every day. But there was something more to be done, apparently, before she put on her neckerchief and long sleeves, which she was to wear in the daytime, for now she unlocked the drawer that held her private treasures. It is more than a month since we saw her unlock that drawer before, and now it holds new treasures, so much more precious than the old ones that these are thrust into the corner. Hetty would not care to put the large colored glass ear-rings into her ears now; for see! she has got a beautiful pair of gold and pearls and garnet, lying snugly in a pretty little box lined with white satin. Oh the delight of taking out that little box and looking at the ear-rings! Do not reason about it, my philosophical reader, and say that Hetty, being very pretty, must have known that it did not signify whether she had on any ornaments or not; and that, moreover, to look at ear-rings which she could not possibly wear out of her bed-room could hardly be a satisfaction, the essence of vanity being a reference to the impressions produced on others; you will never understand women's natures if you are so excessively rational. Try rather to divest yourself of all your rational prejudices, as much as if you were studying the psychology of a canary bird, and only watch the movements of this pretty round creature as she turns her head on one side with an unconscious smile at the ear-rings nestled in the little box. Ah, you think, it is for the sake of the person who has given them to her, and her thoughts are gone back now to the moment when they were put into her hands. No; else why should she have cared to have ear-rings rather than anything else? and I know

that she had longed for ear-rings from among all the ornaments she could imagine.

"Little, little ears!" Arthur had said, pretending to pinch them one evening, as Hetty sat beside him on the grass without her hat. "I wish I had some pretty ear-rings!" she said in a moment, almost before she knew what she was saying — the wish lay so close to her lips, it *would* flutter past them at the slightest breath. And the next day — it was only last week — Arthur had ridden over to Rosseter on purpose to buy them. That little wish so *naïvely* uttered, seemed to him the prettiest bit of childishness; he had never heard anything like it before; and he had wrapped the box up in a great many covers, that he might see Hetty unwrapping it with growing curiosity, till at last her eyes flashed back their new delight into his.

No, she was not thinking most of the giver when she smiled at the ear-rings, for now she is taking them out of the box, not to press them to her lips, but to fasten them in her ears, — only for one moment, to see how pretty they look, as she peeps at them in the glass against the wall, with first one position of the head and then another, like a listening bird. It is impossible to be wise on the subject of ear-rings as one looks at her; what should those delicate pearls and crystals be made for, if not for such ears? One cannot even find fault with the tiny round hole which they leave when they are taken out; perhaps water-nixies, and such lovely things without souls, have these little round holes in their ears by nature, ready to hang jewels in. And Hetty must be one of them: it is too painful to think that she is a woman, with a woman's destiny before her — a woman spinning in young ignorance a light web of folly and vain hopes which may one day close round her and press upon her, a rancorous poisoned garment, changing all at once her fluttering, trivial butterfly sensations into a life of deep human anguish.

But she cannot keep in the ear-rings long, else she may make her uncle and aunt wait. She puts them quickly into the box again, and shuts them up. Some day she will be able to wear any ear-rings she likes, and already she lives in an invisible world of brilliant costumes, shimmering gauze, soft satin, and velvet, such as the lady's-maid at the Chase has shown her in Miss Lydia's wardrobe: she feels the bracelets on her arms, and treads on a soft carpet in front of a tall mirror. But she has one thing in the drawer which she can venture to wear to-day, because she can hang it on the chain

of dark-brown berries which she has been used to wear on grand days, with a tiny flat scent-bottle at the end of it tucked inside her frock; and she *must* put on her brown berries — her neck would look so unfinished without it. Hetty was not quite as fond of the locket as of the ear-rings, though it was a handsome large locket, with enamelled flowers at the back and a beautiful gold border round the glass, which showed a light-brown slightly waving lock, forming a background for two little dark rings. She must keep it under her clothes, and no one would see it. But Hetty had another passion, only a little less strong than her love of finery; and that other passion made her like to wear the locket even hidden in her bosom. She would always have worn it, if she had dared to encounter her aunt's questions about a ribbon round her neck. So now she slipped it on along her chain of dark-brown berries, and snapped the chain round her neck. It was not a very long chain, only allowing the locket to hang a little way below the edge of her frock. And now she had nothing to do but to put on her long sleeves, her new white gauze neckerchief, and her straw hat trimmed with white to-day instead of the pink, which had become rather faded under the July sun. That hat made the drop of bitterness in Hetty's cup to-day, for it was not quite new — everybody would see that it was a little tanned against the white ribbon — and Mary Burge, she felt sure, would have a new hat or bonnet on. She looked for consolation at her fine white cotton stockings: they really were very nice indeed, and she had given almost all her spare money for them. Hetty's dream of the future could not make her insensible to triumph in the present: to be sure, Captain Donnithorne loved her so, that he would never care about looking at other people, but then those other people didn't know how he loved her, and she was not satisfied to appear shabby and insignificant in their eyes even for a short space.

The whole party was assembled in the house-place when Hetty went down, all of course in their Sunday clothes; and the bells had been ringing so this morning in honor of the Captain's twenty-first birthday, and the work had all been got done so early, that Marty and Tommy were not quite easy in their minds until their mother had assured them that going to church was not part of the day's festivities. Mr. Poyser had once suggested that the house should be shut up, and left to take care of itself; "for," said he, "there's no danger of anybody's breaking in — everybody'll be at the Chase, thieves

an' all. If we lock th' house up, all the men can go: it's a day they wouna sec twice i' their lives." But Mrs. Poyser answered with great decision: "I never left the house to take care of itself since I was a missis, and I never will. There's been ill-looking tramps enoo' about the place this last week, to carry off every ham an' every spoon we'n got; and they all collogue together, them tramps, as it's a mercy they hanna come and poisoned the dogs and murdered us all in our beds afore we knowed, some Friday night when we'n got the money in th' house to pay the men. And it's like enough the tramps know where we're going as well as we do oursens; for if Old Harry wants any work done, you may be sure he'll find the means."

"Nonsense about murdering us in our beds," said Mr. Poyser; "I've got a gun i' our room, hanna I? and thee'st got ears as 'ud find it out if a mouse was gnawing the bacon. Howiver, if thee wouldstua be easy, Alick can stay at home i' the forepart o' the day, and Tim can come back tow'rds five o'clock, and let Alick have his turn. They may let Growler loose if anybody offers to do mischief, and there's Alick's dog, too, ready enough to set his tooth in a tramp if Alick gives him a wink."

Mrs. Poyser accepted this compromise, but thought it advisable to bar and bolt to the utmost; and now, at the last moment before starting, Nancy, the dairy-maid, was closing the shutters of the house-place, although the window, lying under the immediate observation of Alick and the dogs, might have been supposed the least likely to be selected for a burglarious attempt.

The covered cart, without springs, was standing ready to carry the whole family except the men-servants: Mr. Poyser and the grandfather sat on the seat in front, and within there was room for all the women and children; the fuller the cart the better, because then the jolting would not hurt so much, and Nancy's broad person and thick arms were an excellent cushion to be pitched on. But Mr. Poyser drove at no more than a walking pace, that there might be as little risk of jolting as possible on this warm day; and there was time to exchange greetings and remarks with the foot-passengers who were going the same way, specking the paths between the green meadows and the golden cornfields with bits of movable bright color — a scarlet waistcoat to match the poppies that nodded a little too thickly among the corn, or a dark-blue neckerchief with ends flaunting across a brand-new white



smock-frock. All Broxton and all Hayslope were to be at the Chase, and make merry there in honor of "th' heir;" and the old men and women, who had never been so far down this side of the hill for the last twenty years, wero being brought from Broxton and Hayslope in one of the farmer's wagons, at Mr. Irwine's suggestion. The church-bells had struck up again now—a last tune, before the ringers came down the hill to have their share in the festival; and before the bells had finished, other music was heard approaching, so that even Old Brown, the sober horse that was drawing Mr. Poyser's cart, began to prick up his ears. It was the band of the Benefit Club, which had mustered in all its glory; that is to say, in bright-blue scarfs and blue favors, and carrying its banner with the motto, "Let brotherly love continue," encircling a picture of a stone-pit.

The carts, of course, were not to enter the Chase. Every one must get down at the lodges, and the vehicles must be sent back.

"Why, the Chase is like a fair a'ready," said Mrs. Poyser as she got down from the cart, and saw the groups scattered under the great oaks, and the boys running about in the hot sunshine to survey the tall poles surmounted by the fluttering garments that were to be the prize of the successful climbers. "I should ha' thought there wasna so many people i' the two parishes. Mercy on us! how hot it is out o' the shade! Come here, Totty, else your little face 'ull be burnt to a soratchin'! They might ha' cooked the dinners i' that open space an' saved the fires. I shall go to Mrs. Best's room an' sit down."

"Stop a bit, stop a bit!" said Mr. Poyser. "There's th' waggin coming wi' th' old folks in't; it'll be such a sight as wonna come o'er again, to see 'em get down an' walk along all together. You remember some on 'em i' their prime, eh, father?"

"Ay, ay," said old Martin, walking slowly under the shade of the lodge porch, from which he could see the aged party descend. "I remember Jacob Taft walking fifty mile after the Scotch raybele, when they turned back from Stoniton."

He felt himself quite a youngster, with a long life before him, as he saw the Hayslope patriarch, old Feyther Taft, descend from the wagon and walk towards him, in his brown nightcap, and leaning on his two sticks.

"Well, Mester Taft," shouted old Martin, at the utmost stretch of his voice,—for though he knew the old man was

stone deaf, he could not omit the propriety of a greeting,—  
“you’re hearty yet. You can enjoy yoursen to-day, for-all  
you’re ninety an’ better.”

“Your sarvant, mesters, your sarvant,” said Feyther Taft  
in a treble tone, perceiving that he was in company.

The aged group, under care of sons or daughters, themselves worn and gray, passed on along the least winding carriage-road towards the house, where a special table was prepared for them; while the Poyser party wisely struck across the grass under the shade of the great trees, but not out of view of the house-front, with its sloping lawn and flower-beds, or of the pretty striped marquee at the edge of the lawn, standing at right angles with two larger marquees on each side of the open green space where the games were to be played. The house would have been nothing but a plain square mansion of Queen Anne’s time, but for the remnant of an old abbey to which it was united at one end, in much the same way as one may sometimes see a new farmhouse rising high and prim at the end of older and lower farm-offices. The fine old remnant stood a little backward and under the shadow of tall beeches, but the sun was now on the taller and more advanced front, the blinds were all down, and the house seemed asleep in the hot mid-day: it made Hetty quite sad to look at it: Arthur must be somewhere in the back rooms, with the grand company, where he could not possibly know that she was come, and she should not see him for a long, long while—not till after dinner, when they said he was to come up and make a speech.

But Hetty was wrong in part of her conjecture. No grand company was come except the Irwines, for whom the carriage had been sent early, and Arthur was at that moment not in a back room, but walking with the Rector into the broad stone cloisters of the old abbey, where the long tables were laid for all the cottage tenants and the farm servants. A very handsome young Briton he looked to-day, in high spirits and a bright-blue frock-coat, the highest mode—his arm no longer in a sling. So open-looking and candid, too; but candid people have their secrets, and secrets leave no lines in young faces.

“Upon my word,” he said, as they entered the cool cloisters, “I think the cottagers have the best of it: these cloisters make a delightful dining-room on a hot day. That was capital advice of yours, Irwine, about the dinners—to let them be as orderly and comfortable as possible, and only for

the tenants: especially as I had only a limited sum after all, for though my grandfather talked of a *carte blanche*, he couldn't make up his mind to trust me, when it came to the point."

"Never mind, you'll give more pleasure in this quiet way," said Mr. Irwine. "In this sort of thing people are constantly confounding liberality with riot and disorder. It sounds very grand to say that so many sheep and oxen were roasted whole, and everybody ate who liked to come; but in the end it generally happens that no one has had an enjoyable meal. If the people get a good dinner and a moderate quantity of ale in the middle of the day, they'll be able to enjoy the games as the day cools. You can't hinder some of them from getting too much towards evening, but drunkenness and darkness go better together than drunkenness and daylight."

"Wall, I hope there won't be much of it. I've kept the Treddleston people away, by having a feast for them in the town; and I've got Casson and Adam Bede, and some other good fellows, to look to the giving out of ale in the booths, and to take care things don't go too far. Come, let us go up above now, and see the dinner-tables for the large tenants."

They went up the stone staircase leading simply to the long gallery above the cloisters, a gallery where all the dusty worthless old pictures had been banished for the last three generations — mouldy portraits of Queen Elizabeth and her ladies, General Monk with his eye knocked out, Daniel very much in the dark among the lions, and Julius Cæsar on horseback, with a high nose and laurel crown, holding his Commentaries in his hand.

"What a capital thing it is that they saved this piece of the old Abbey!" said Arthur. "If I'm ever master here, I shall do up the gallery in first-rate style: we've got no room in the house a third as large as this. That second table is for the farmers' wives and children: Mrs. Best said it would be more comfortable for the mothers and children to be by themselves. I was determined to have the children, and make a regular family thing of it. I shall be 'the old squire' to those little lads and lasses some day, and they'll tell their children what a much finer young fellow I was than my own son. There's a table for the women and children below as well. But you will see them all — you will come up with me after dinner, I hope?"

"Yes, to be sure," said Mr. Irwine. "I wouldn't miss your maiden speech to the tenantry."

"And there will be something else you'll like to hear," said Arthur. "Let us go into the library and I'll tell you all about it while my grandfather is in the drawing-room with the ladies. Something that will surprise you," he continued, as they sat down. "My grandfather has come round after all."

"What, about Adam?"

"Yes; I should have ridden over to tell you about it, only I was so busy. You know I told you I had quite given up arguing the matter with him—I thought it was hopeless; but yesterday morning he asked me to come in here to him before I went out, and astonished me by saying that he had decided on all the new arrangements he should make in consequence of old Satchell being obliged to lay by work, and that he intended to employ Adam in superintending the woods at a salary of a guinea a-week, and the use of a pony to be kept here. I believe the secret of it is, he saw from the first it would be a profitable plan, but he had some particular dislike of Adam to get over—and besides, the fact that I propose a thing is generally a reason with him for rejecting it. There's the most curious contradiction in my grandfather: I know he means to leave me all the money he has saved, and he is likely enough to have cut off poor Aunt Lydia, who has been a slave to him all her life, with only five hundred a-year, for the sake of giving me all the more; and yet I sometimes think he positively hates me because I'm his heir. I believe if I were to break my neck, he would feel it the greatest misfortune that could befall him, and yet it seems a pleasure to him to make my life a series of petty annoyances."

"Ah, my boy, it is not only women's love that is *ἀνέρωτος ἔργον*, as old Æschylus calls it. There's plenty of 'unloving love' in the world of a masculine kind. But tell me about Adam. Has he accepted the post? I don't see that it can be much more profitable than his present work, though, to be sure, it will leave him a good deal of time on his own hands."

"Well, I felt some doubt about it when I spoke to him, and he seemed to hesitate at first. His objection was, that he thought he should not be able to satisfy my grandfather. But I begged him as a personal favor to me not to let any reason prevent him from accepting the place, if he really liked the employment, and would not be giving up anything that was more profitable to him. And he assured me he should

like it of all things ; — it would be a great step forward for him in business, and it would enable him to do what he had long wished to do — to give up working for Burge. He says he shall have plenty of time to superintend a little business of his own, which he and Seth will carry on, and will perhaps be able to enlarge by degrees. So he has agreed at last, and I have arranged that he shall dine with the large tenants to-day ; and I mean to announce the appointment to them, and ask them to drink Adam's health. It's a little drama I've got up in honor of my friend Adam. He's a fine fellow, and I like the opportunity of letting people know that I think so."

"A drama in which friend Arthur piques himself on having a pretty part to play," said Mr. Irwine, smiling. But when he saw Arthur color, he went on relongingly, "My part, you know, is always that of the old Foggy who sees nothing to admire in the young folks. I don't like to admit that I'm proud of my pupil when he does graceful things. But I must play the amiable old gentleman for once, and second your toast in honor of Adam. Has your grandfather yielded on the other point too, and agreed to have a respectable man as steward ?"

"Oh, no," said Arthur, rising from his chair with an air of impatience, and walking along the room with his hands in his pockets. "He's got some project or other about letting the Chase Farm, and bargaining for a supply of milk and butter for the house. But I ask no questions about it — it makes me too angry. I believe he means to do all the business himself, and have nothing in the shape of a steward. It's amazing what energy he has, though."

"Well, we'll go to the ladies now," said Mr. Irwine, rising too. "I want to tell my mother what a splendid throne you've prepared for her under the marquise."

"Yes, and we must be going to luncheon too," said Arthur. "It must be two o'clock, for there is the gong beginning to sound for the tenants' dinners."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## DINNER-TIME.

WHEN Adam heard that he was to dine up-stairs with the large tenants, he felt rather uncomfortable at the idea of being exalted in this way above his mother and Seth, who were to dine in the cloisters below. But Mr. Mills, the butler, assured him that Captain Donnithorne had given particular orders about it, and would be very angry if Adam was not there.

Adam nodded, and went up to Seth, who was standing a few yards off. "Seth, lad," he said, "the Captain has sent to say I'm to dine up-stairs—he wishes it particular, Mr. Mills says, so I suppose it 'ud be behaving ill for me not to go. But I don't like sitting up above thee and mother, as if I was better than my own flesh and blood. Thee't not take it unkind, I hope?"

"Nay, nay, lad," said Seth, "thy honor's our honor; and if thee get'st respect, thee'st won it by thy own deserts. The further I see thee above me, the better, so long as thee feel'st like a brother to me. It's because o' thy being appointed over the woods, and it's nothing bnt what's right. That's a place o' trust, and thee't above a common workman now."

"Ay," said Adam, "but nobody knows a word about it yet. I haven't given notice to Mr. Burge about leaving him, and I don't like to tell anybody else about it before he knows, for he'll be a good bit hurt, I doubt. People 'ull be wondering to see me there, and they'll like enough be guessing the reason, and asking questions, for there's been so much talk up and down about my having the place, this last three weeks."

"Well, thee canst say thee wast ordered to come without being told the reason. That's the truth. And mother 'ull be fine and joyful about it. Let's go and tell her."

Adam was not the only guest invited to come up-stairs on other grounds than the amount he contributed to the rent-roll. There were other people in the two parishes who derived dignity from their functions rather than from their pocket, and of these Bartle Massey was one. His lame walk was

rather slower than usual on this warm day, so Adam lingered behind when the bell rang for dinner, that he might walk up with his old friend; for he was a little too shy to join the Poyser party on this public occasion. Opportunities of getting to Hetty's side would be sure to turn up in the course of the day, and Adam contented himself with that, for he disliked any risk of being "joked" about Hetty; — the big, outspoken, fearless man was very shy and diffident as to his love-making.

"Well, Mester Massey," said Adam, as Bartle came up, "I'm going to dine up-stairs with you to-day: the Captain's sent me orders."

"Ah!" said Bartle, pausing, with one hand on his back. "Then there's something in the wind — there's something in the wind. Have you heard anything about what the old Squire means to do?"

"Why, yes," said Adam; "I'll tell you what I know, because I believe you can keep a still tongue in your head if you like, and I hope you'll not let drop a word till it's common talk, for I've particular reasons against its being known."

"Trust to me, my boy, trust to me. I've got no wife to worm it out of me and then run out and cackle it in everybody's hearing. If you trust a man, let him be a bachelor — let him be a bachelor."

"Well, then, it was so far settled yesterday, that I'm to take the management o' the woods. The Captain sent for me t' offer it me, when I was seeing to the poles and things here, and I've agreed to't. But if anybody asks any questions up-stairs, just you take no notice, and turn the talk to something else, and I'll be obliged to you. Now, let us go on, for we're pretty nigh the last, I think."

"I know what to do, never fear," said Bartle, moving on. "The news will be good sauce to my dinner. Ay, ay, my boy, you'll get on. I'll back you for an eye at measuring, and a head-piece for figures, against any man in this county; and you've had good teaching — you've had good teaching."

When they got up-stairs, the question which Arthur had left unsettled, as to who was to be president, and who vice, was still under discussion, so that Adam's entrance passed without remark.

"It stands to sense," Mr. Casson was saying, "as old Mr. Poyser, as is th' oldest man i' the room, should sit at top o' the table. I wasn't butler fifteen year without learning the rights and the wrongs about dinner."

"Nay, nay," said old Martin, "I'n gi'en up to my son; I'm no tenant now: let my son take my place. Th' ould foulds ha' had their turn: they mun make way for the young uns."

"I should ha' thought the biggest tenant had the best right, more nor th' oldest," said Luke Britton, who was not fond of the critical Mr. Poyser; "there's Mester Holdsworth has more land nor anybody else on th' estate."

"Well," said Mr. Poyser, "suppose we say the man wi' the foulest land shall sit at top; then whoever gets th' honor, there'll be no envying on him."

"Eh, here's Mester Massey," said Mr. Craig, who, being a neutral in the dispute, had no interest but in conciliation; "the schoolmaster ought to be able to tell you what's right. Who's to sit at top o' the table, Mr. Massey?"

"Why, the broadest man," said Bartle; "and then he won't take up other folks' room; and the next broadest must sit at bottom."

This happy mode of settling the dispute produced much laughter—a smaller joke would have sufficed for that. Mr. Casson, however, did not feel it compatible with his dignity and superior knowledge to join in the laugh, until it turned out that he was fixed on as the second broadest man. Martin Poyser the younger, as the broadest, was to be president, and Mr. Casson, as next broadest, was to be vice.

Owing to this arrangement, Adam, being, of course, at the bottom of the table, fell under the immediate observation of Mr. Casson, who, too much occupied with the question of precedence, had not hitherto noticed his entrance. Mr. Casson, we have seen, considered Adam "rather lifted up and peppery-like:" he thought the gentry made more fuss about this young carpenter than was necessary; they made no fuss about Mr. Casson, although he had been an excellent butler for fifteen years.

"Well, Mr. Bede, you're one o' them as mounts hup'ards apace," he said, when Adam sat down. "You've niver dined here before, as I remember."

"No, Mr. Casson," said Adam, in his strong voice, that could be heard along the table; "I've never dined here before, but I come by Captain Donnithorne's wish, and I hope it's not disagreeable to anybody here."

"Nay, nay," said several voices at once, "we're glad ye're come. Who's got anything to say again' it?"

"And ye'll sing us 'Over the hills and far away,' after din-



ner, wonna ye ?" said Mr. Chowne. "That's a song I'm uncommon fond on."

"Peeh!" said Mr. Craig; "it's not to be named by side o' the Scotch tunes. I've never cared about singing myself; I've had something better to do. A man that's got the names and the natur o' plants in's head isna likely to keep a hollow place t' hold tunes in. But a second cousin o' mine, a drovier, was a rare hand at remembering the Scotch tunes. He'd got nothing else to think on."

"The Scotch tunes!" said Bartle Massey, contemptuously; "I've heard enough o' the Scotch tunes to last me while I live. They're fit for nothing but to frighten the birds with—that's to say, the English birds, for the Scotch birds may sing Scotch for what I know. Give the lads a bagpipes instead of a rattle, and I'll answer for it the corn 'll be safe."

"Yes, there's folks as find a pleasure in undervallying what they know but little about," said Mr. Craig.

"Why, the Scotch tunes are just like a scolding, nagging woman," Bartle went on, without deigning to notice Mr. Craig's remark. "They go on with the same thing over and over again, and never come to a reasonable end. Anybody 'ud think the Scotch tunes had always been asking a question of somebody as deaf as old Taft, and had never got an answer yet."

Adam minded the less about sitting by Mr. Casson, because this position enabled him to see Hetty, who was not far off him at the next table. Hetty, however, had not even noticed his presence yet, for she was giving angry attention to Totty, who insisted on drawing up her feet on to the bench in antique fashion, and thereby threatened to make dusty marks on Hetty's pink-and-white frock. No sooner were the little fat legs pushed down than up they came again, for Totty's eyes were too busy in staring at the large dishes to see where the plum-pudding was, for her to retain any consciousness of her legs. Hetty got quite out of patience, and at last, with a frown and pout, and gathering tears, she said—

"Oh dear, aunt, I wish you'd speak to Totty; she keeps putting her legs up so, and messing my frock."

"What's the matter wi' the child? She can niver please you," said the mother. "Let her come by the side o' me, then: I can put up wi' her."

Adam was looking at Hetty, and saw the frown, and pout, and the dark eyes seeming to grow larger with pettish half-gathered tears. Quiet Mary Burge, who sat near enough to

see that Hetty was cross, and that Adam's eyes were fixed on her, thought that so sensible a man as Adam must be reflecting on the small value of beauty in a woman whose temper was bad. Mary was a good girl, not given to indulge in evil feelings, but she said to herself, that, since Hetty had a bad temper, it was better Adam should know it. And it was quite true, that if Hetty had been plain she would have looked very ugly and unamiable at that moment, and no one's moral judgment upon her would have been in the least beguiled. But really there was something quite charming in her pettishness: it looked so much more like innocent distress than ill-humor; and the severe Adam felt no movement of disapprobation; he only felt a sort of amused pity, as if he had seen a kitten setting up its back, or a little bird with its feathers ruffled. He could not gather what was vexing her, but it was impossible to him to feel otherwise than that she was the prettiest thing in the world, and that if he could have his way, nothing should ever vex her any more. And presently, when Totty was gone, she caught his eye, and her face broke into one of its brightest smiles, as she nodded to him. It was a bit of flirtation: she knew Mary Burge was looking at them. But the smile was like wine to Adam.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

## THE HEALTH-DRINKING.

WHEN the dinner was over, and the first draughts from the great cask of birthday ale were brought up, room was made for the broad Mr. Poyser at the side of the table, and two chairs were placed at the head. It had been settled very definitely what Mr. Poyser was to do when the young Squire should appear, and for the last five minutes he had been in a state of abstraction, with his eyes fixed on the dark picture opposite, and his hands busy with the loose cash and other articles in his breeches-pockets.

When the young Squire entered, with Mr. Irwine by his side, every one stood up, and this moment of homage was very agreeable to Arthur. He liked to feel his own importance, and besides that, he cared a great deal for the good-will of these people: he was fond of thinking that they had a

heartly, special regard for him. The pleasure he felt was in his face as he said —

"My grandfather and I hope all our friends here have enjoyed their dinuer, and find my birthday ale good. Mr. Irwine and I are come to taste it with you, and I am sure we shall all like anything the better that the Rector shares with us."

All eyes were now turned on Mr. Poyser, who, with his hands still busy in his pockets, began with the deliberateness of a slow-striking clock. "Captain, my neighbors have put it upo' me to speak for 'em to-day, for where folks think pretty much alike, one spokesman's as good as a score. And though we've mayhappen got contrairy ways o' thinking about a many things — one man lays down his land one way, an' another another — an' I'll not take it upon me to speak to no man's farming, but my own — this I'll say, as we're all o' one mind about our young Squire. We've pretty nigh all on us known you when you war a little un, an' we've niver known anything on you but what was good an' honorable. You speak fair an' y' act fair, an' we're joyful when we look forrard to your being our landlord, for we b'lieve you mean to do right by everybody, an' 'ull make no man's bread bitter to him if you can help it. That's what I mean, an' that's what we all mean; and when a man's said what he means, he'd better stop, for th' ale 'ull be none the better for stannin'. An' I'll not say how we like th' ale yet, for we couldna well taste it till we'd drunk your health in it; but the dinner was good, an' if there's anybody hasna enjoyed it, it must be the fault of his own inside. An' as for the Rector's company, it's well-known as that's welcome t' all the parish wherever he may be; an' I hope, an' we all hope, as he'll live to see us old folks, an' our children grown to men an' women, an' your honor a family man. I've no more to say as concerns the present time, an' so we'll drink our young Squire's health — three times three."

Hereupon a glorious shouting, a rapping, a jingling, a clattering, and a shouting, with plentiful *da capo*, pleasanter than a strain of sublimest music in the ears that receive such a tribute for the first time. Arthur had felt a twinge of conscience during Mr. Poyser's speech, but it was too feeble to nullify the pleasure he felt in being praised. Did he not deserve what was said of him on the whole? If there was something in his conduct that Poyser wouldn't have liked if he had known it, why, no man's conduct will bear too close an inspection; and Poyser was not likely to know it; and,

after all, what had he done? Gone a little too far, perhaps, in flirtation, but another man in his place would have acted much worse; and no harm would come — no harm *should* come, for the next time he was alone with Hetty, he would explain to her that she must not think seriously of him or of what had passed. It was necessary to Arthur, you perceive, to be satisfied with himself: uncomfortable thoughts must be got rid of by good intentions for the future, which can be formed so rapidly, that he had time to be uncomfortable and to become easy again before Mr. Poyser's slow speech was finished, and when it was time for him to speak he was quite light-hearted.

"I thank you all, my good friends and neighbors," Arthur said, "for the good opinion of me, and the kind feelings towards me which Mr. Poyser has been expressing on your behalf and on his own, and it will always be my heartiest wish to deserve them. In the course of things we may expect that, if I live, I shall one day or other be your landlord; indeed it is on the ground of that expectation that my grandfather has wished me to celebrate this day and to come among you now; and I look forward to this position, not merely as one of power and pleasure for myself, but as a means of benefiting my neighbors. It hardly becomes so young a man as I am, to talk much about farming to you, who are most of you so much older, and are men of experience; still, I have interested myself a good deal in such matters, and learned as much about them as my opportunities have allowed; and when the course of events shall place the estate in my hands, it will be my first desire to afford my tenants all the encouragement a landlord can give them, in improving their land, and trying to bring about a better practice of husbandry. It will be my wish to be looked on by all my deserving tenants as their best friend, and nothing would make me so happy as to be able to respect every man on the estate, and to be respected by him in return. It is not my place at present to enter into particulars; I only meet your good hopes concerning me by telling you that my own hopes correspond to them — that what you expect from me I desire to fulfil; and I am quite of Mr. Poyser's opinion, that when a man has said what he means, he had better stop. But the pleasure I feel in having my own health drunk by you would not be perfect if we did not drink the health of my grandfather, who has filled the place of both parents to me. I will say no more, until you have joined me in drinking his health on a day when he

has wished me to appear among you as the future representative of his name and family."

Perhaps there was no one present except Mr. Irwine who thoroughly understood and approved Arthur's graceful mode of proposing his grandfather's health. The farmers thought the young Squire knew well enough that they hated the old Squire, and Mrs. Poyser said, "he'd better not ha' stirred a kettle o' sour broth." The bucolic mind does not readily apprehend the refinements of good taste. But the toast could not be rejected, and when it had been drunk, Arthur said, —

"I thank you, both for my grandfather and myself; and now there is one more thing I wish to tell you, that you may share my pleasure about it, as I hope and believe you will. I think there can be no man here who has not a respect, and some of you, I am sure, have a very high regard, for my friend Adam Bede. It is well known to every one in this neighborhood that there is no man whose word can be more depended on than his; that whatever he undertakes to do, he does well, and is as careful for the interests of those who employ him as for his own. I'm proud to say that I was very fond of Adam when I was a little boy, and I have never lost my old feeling for him — I think that shows that I know a good fellow when I find him. It has long been my wish that he should have the management of the woods on the estate, which happen to be very valuable; not only because I think so highly of his character, but because he has the knowledge and the skill which fit him for the place. And I am happy to tell you that it is my grandfather's wish too, and it is now settled that Adam shall manage the woods — a change which I am sure will be very much for the advantage of the estate; and I hope you will by-and-by join me in drinking his health, and in wishing him all the prosperity in life that he deserves. But there is a still older friend of mine than Adam Bede present, and I need not tell you that it is Mr. Irwine. I'm sure you will agree with me that we must drink no other person's health until we have drunk his. I know you have all reason to love him, but no one of his parishioners has so much reason as I. Come, charge your glasses, and let us drink to our excellent Rector — three times three!"

This toast was drunk with all the enthusiasm that was wanting to the last, and it certainly was the most picturesque moment in the scene when Mr. Irwine got up to speak, and all the faces in the room were turned towards him. The superior refinement of his face was much more striking than

that of Arthur's when seen in comparison with the people round them. Arthur's was a much commoner British face, and the splendor of his new-fashioned clothes was more akin to the young farmer's taste in costume than Mr. Irwine's powder, and the well-brushed but well-worn black, which seemed to be his chosen suit for great occasions; for he had the mysterious secret of never wearing a new-looking coat.

"This is not the first time, by a great many," he said, "that I have had to thank my parishioners for giving me tokens of their good will, but neighborly kindness is among those things that are the more precious the older they get. Indeed, our pleasant meeting to-day is a proof that when what is good comes of age and is likely to live, there is reason for rejoicing, and the relation between us as clergyman and parishioners came of age two years ago, for it is three-and-twenty years since I first came among you, and I see some tall fine-looking young men here, as well as some blooming young women, that were far from looking as pleasantly at me when I christened them, as I am happy to see them looking now. But I'm sure you will not wonder when I say, that among all those young men, the one in whom I have the strongest interest is my friend Mr. Arthur Donnithorne, for whom you have just expressed your regard. I had the pleasure of being his tutor for several years, and have naturally had opportunities of knowing him intimately which cannot have occurred to any one else who is present; and I have some pride as well as pleasure in assuring you that I share your high hopes concerning him, and your confidence in his possession of those qualities which will make him an excellent landlord when the time shall come for him to take that important position among you. We feel alike on most matters on which a man who is getting towards fifty can feel in common with a young man of one-and-twenty, and he has just been expressing a feeling which I share very heartily, and I would not willingly omit the opportunity of saying so. That feeling is his value and respect for Adam Bede. People in a high station are of course more thought of and talked about, and have their virtues more praised, than those whose lives are passed in humble every-day work; but every sensible man knows how necessary that humble every-day work is, and how important it is to us that it should be done well. And I agree with my friend Mr. Arthur Donnithorne in feeling that when a man whose duty lies in that sort of work shows a character which would make him an example in any station, his merit should

be acknowledged. He is one of those to whom honor is due, and his friends should delight to honor him. I know Adam Bede well — I know what he is as a workman, and what he has been as a son and brother — and I am saying the simplest truth when I say that I respect him as much as I respect any man living. But I am not speaking to you about a stranger; some of you are his intimate friends, and I believe there is not one here who does not know enough of him to join heartily in drinking his health."

As Mr. Irwine paused, Arthur jumped up, and, filling his glass, said, "A bumper to Adam Bede, and may he live to have sons as faithful and clever as himself!"

No hearer, not even Bartle Massey, was so delighted with this toast as Mr. Poyser: "tough work" as his first speech had been, he would have started up to make another if he had not known the extreme irregularity of such a course. As it was, he found an outlet for his feeling in drinking his ale unusually fast, and setting down his glass with a swing of his arm and a determined rap. If Jonathan Burge and a few others felt less comfortable on the occasion, they tried their best to look contented, and so the toast was drunk with a good-will apparently unanimous.

Adam was rather paler than usual when he got up to thank his friends. He was a good deal moved by this public tribute — very naturally, for he was in the presence of all his little world, and it was uniting to do him honor. But he felt no shyness about speaking, not being troubled with small vanity or lack of words; he looked neither awkward nor embarrassed, but stood in his usual firm upright attitude, with his head thrown a little backward and his hands perfectly still, in that rough dignity which is peculiar to intelligent, honest, well-built workmen, who are never wondering what is their business in the world.

"I'm quite taken by surprise," he said. "I didn't expect anything o' this sort, for it's a good deal more than my wages. But I've the more reason to be grateful to you, Captain, and to you, Mr. Irwine, and to all my friends here, who've drunk my health and wished me well. It 'ud be nonsense for me to be saying, I don't at all deserve th' opinion you have of me; that 'ud be poor thanks to you, to say that you've known me all these years, and yet haven't sense enough to find out a great deal o' the truth about me. You think, if I undertake to do a bit o' work, I'll do it well, be my pay big or little — and that's true. I'd be ashamed to stand before you here if

it wasna true. But it seems to me, that's a man's plain duty, and nothing to be conceited about, and it's pretty clear to me as I've never done more than my duty; for let us do what we will, it's only making use o' the sperrit and the powers that ha' been given to us. And so this kindness o' yours, I'm sure, is no debt you owe me, but a free gift, and as such I accept it and am thankful. And as to this new employment I've taken in hand, I'll only say that I took it at Captain Donni-thorne's desire, and that I'll try to fulfil his expectations. I'd wish for no better lot than to work under him, and to know that while I was getting my own bread I was taking care of his int'rests. For I believe he's one o' those gentlemen as wishes to do the right thing, and to leave the world a bit better than he found it, which it's my belief every man may do, whether he's gentle or simple, whether he sets a good bit o' work going and finds the money, or whether he does the work with his own hands. There's no occasion for me to say any more about what I feel towards him: I hope to show it through the rest o' my life in my actions."

There were various opinions about Adam's speech: some of the women whispered that he didn't show himself thankful enough, and seemed to speak as proud as could be; but most of the men were of opinion that nobody could speak more straightfor'ard, and that Adam was as fine a chap as need to be. While such observations were being buzzed about, mingled with wonderings as to what the old Squire meant to do for a bailiff, and whether he was going to have a steward, the two gentlemen had risen, and were walking round to the table where the wives and children sat. There was none of the strong ale here, of course, but wine and dessert—sparkling gooseberry for the young ones, and some good sherry for the mothers. Mrs. Poyser was at the head of this table, and Totty was now seated in her lap, bending her small nose deep down into a wine-glass in search of the nuts floating there.

"How do you do, Mrs. Poyser?" said Arthur. "Weren't you pleased to hear your husband make such a good speech to-day?"

"Oh, sir, the men are mostly so tongue-tied—you're forced partly to guess what they mean, as you do wi' the dumb creaturs."

"What! you think you could have made it better for him?" said Mr. Irwine, laughing.

"Well, sir, when I want to say anything, I can mostly find words to say it in, thank God. Not as I'm a-finding fault wi'



my husband, for if he's a man o' few words, what he says he'll stand to."

"I'm sure I never saw a prettier party than this," Arthur said, looking round at the apple-cheeked children. "My aunt and the Miss Irwines will come up and see you presently. They were afraid of the noise of the toasts, but it would be a shame for them not to see you at table."

He walked on, speaking to the mothers and patting the children, while Mr. Irwine satisfied himself with standing still, and nodding at a distance, that no one's attention might be disturbed from the young Squire, the hero of the day. Arthur did not venture to stop near Hetty, but merely bowed to her as he passed along the opposite side. The foolish child felt her heart swelling with discontent; for what woman was ever satisfied with apparent neglect, even when she knows it to be the mask of love? Hetty thought this was going to be the most miserable day she had had for a long while; a moment of chill daylight and reality came across her dream: Arthur, who had seemed so near to her only a few hours before, was separated from her, as the hero of a great procession is separated from a small outsider in the crowd.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE GAMES.

THE great dance was not to begin until eight o'clock; but for any lads and lasses who liked to dance on the shady grass before then, there was music always at hand; for was not the band of the Benefit Club capable of playing excellent jigs, reels, and hornpipes? And, besides this, there was a grand band hired from Rosseter, who, with their wonderful wind-instruments and puffed-out cheeks, were themselves a delightful show to the small boys and girls. To say nothing of Joshua Rann's fiddle, which, by an act of generous forethought, he had provided himself with, in case any one should be of sufficiently pure taste to prefer dancing to a solo on that instrument.

Meantime, when the sun had moved off the great open space in front of the house, the games began. There were of course well-soaped poles to be climbed by the boys and youths, races

to be run by the old women, races to be run in sacks, heavy weights to be lifted by the strong men, and a long list of challenges to such ambitious attempts as that of walking as many yards as possible on one leg — feats in which it was generally remarked that Wiry Ben, being “the lissom’st, springest fellow i’ the country,” was sure to be pre-eminent. To crown all, there was to be a donkey-race — that sublimest of all races, conducted on the grand socialistic idea of everybody encouraging everybody else’s donkey, and the sorriest donkey winning.

And soon after four o’clock, splendid old Mrs. Irwine, in her damask satin and jewels and black lace, was led out by Arthur, followed by the whole family party, to her raised seat under the striped marquee, where she was to give out the prizes to the victors. Staid, formal Miss Lydia had requested to resign that queenly office to the royal old lady, and Arthur was pleased with this opportunity of gratifying his godmother’s taste for stateliness. Old Mr. Donnithorne, the delicately-clean, finely-scented, withered old man, led out Miss Irwine, with his air of punctilious, acid politeness; Mr. Gawaine brought Miss Lydia, looking neutral and stiff in an elegant peach-blossom silk; and Mr. Irwine came last with his pale sister Anne. No other friend of the family, besides Mr. Gawaine, was invited to-day; there was to be a grand dinner for the neighboring gentry on the morrow, but to-day all the forces were required for the entertainment of the tenants.

There was a sunk fence in front of the marquee, dividing the lawn from the park, but a temporary bridge had been made for the passage of the victors, and the groups of people standing, or seated here and there on benches, stretched on each side of the open space from the white marquees up to the sunk fence.

“Upon my word it’s a pretty sight,” said the old lady, in her deep voice, when she was seated, and looked round on the bright scene with its dark-green background; “and it’s the last fête-day I’m likely to see, unless you make haste and get married, Arthur. But take care you get a charming bride, else I would rather die without seeing her.”

“You’re so terribly fastidious, godmother,” said Arthur, “I’m afraid I should never satisfy you with my choice.”

“Well, I won’t forgive you if she’s not handsome. I can’t be put off with amiability, which is always the excuse people are making for the existence of plain people. And she must not be silly; that will never do, because you’ll want man-

aging, and a silly woman can't manage you. Who is that tall young man, Dauphin, with the mild face? There, standing without his hat, and taking such care of that tall old woman by the side of him — his mother, of course. I like to see that."

"What, don't you know him, mother?" said Mr. Irwine. "That is Seth Bede, Adam's brother — a Methodist, but a very good fellow. Poor Seth has looked rather down-hearted of late; I thought it was because of his father's dying in that sad way, but Joshua Rann tells me he wanted to marry that sweet little Methodist preacher who was here about a month ago, and I suppose she refused him."

"Ah, I remember hearing about her: but there are no end of people here that I don't know, for they're grown up and altered so since I used to go about."

"What excellent sight you have!" said old Mr. Donnithorne, who was holding a double glass up to his eyes, "to see the expression of that young man's face so far off. His face is nothing but a pale blurred spot to me. But I fancy I have the advantage of you when we come to look close. I can read small print without spectacles."

"Ah, my dear sir, you began with being very near-sighted, and those near-sighted eyes always wear the best. I want very strong spectacles to read with, but then I think my eyes get better and better for things at a distance. I suppose if I could live another fifty years, I should be blind to everything that wasn't out of other people's sight, like a man who stands in a well, and sees nothing but the stars."

"See," said Arthur, "the old women are ready to set out on their race now. Which do you bet on, Gawaine?"

"The long-legged one, unless they're going to have several heats, and then the little wiry one may win."

"There are the Poyzers, mother, not far off on the right hand," said Miss Irwine. "Mrs. Poyser is looking at you. Do take notice of her."

"To be sure I will," said the old lady, giving a gracious bow to Mrs. Poyser. "A woman who sends me such excellent cream-cheese is not to be neglected. Bless me! what a fat child that is she is holding on her knee! But who is that pretty girl with dark eyes?"

"That is Hetty Sorrel," said Miss Lydia Donnithorne, "Martin Poyser's niece — a very likely young person, and well-looking too. My maid has taught her fine needlework, and she has mended some lace of mine very respectably indeed — very respectably."

. "Why, she has lived with the Poyzers six or seven years, mother; you must have seen her," said Miss Irwine.

"No, I've never seen her, child; at least not as she is now," said Mrs. Irwine, continuing to look at Hetty. "Well-looking, indeed! She's a perfect beauty! I've never seen anything so pretty since my young days. What a pity such beauty as that should be thrown away among the farmers, when it's wanted so terribly among the good families without fortune! I dare say, now, she'll marry a man who would have thought her just as pretty if she had had round eyes and red hair."

Arthur dared not turn his eyes towards Hetty while Mrs. Irwine was speaking of her. He feigned not to hear, and to be occupied with something on the opposite side. But he saw her plainly enough without looking; saw her in heightened beauty, because he heard her beauty praised — for other men's opinion, you know, was like a native climate to Arthur's feelings: it was the air on which they thrived the best, and grew strong. Yes! she *was* enough to turn any man's head: any man in his place would have done and felt the same. And to give her up after all, as he was determined to do, would be an act that he should always look back upon with pride.

"No, mother," said Mr. Irwine, replying to her last words; "I can't agree with you there. The common people are not quite so stupid as you imagine. The commonest man, who has his ounce of sense and feeling, is conscious of the difference between a lovely, delicate woman, and a coarse one. Even a dog feels a difference in their presence. The man may be no better able than the dog to explain the influence the more refined beauty has on him, but he feels it."

"Bless me, Dauphin, what does an old bachelor like you know about it?"

"Oh, that is one of the matters in which old bachelors are wiser than married men, because they have time for more general contemplation. Your fine critic of women must never shackle his judgment by calling one woman his own. But, as an example of what I was saying, that pretty Methodist preacher I mentioned just now, told me that she had preached to the roughest miners, and had never been treated with anything but the utmost respect and kindness by them. The reason is — though she doesn't know it — that there's so much tenderness, refinement, and purity about her. Such a woman as that brings with her 'airs from heaven' that the coarsest fellow is not insensible to." . . .

"Here's a delicate bit of womanhood, or girlhood, coming to receive a prize, I suppose," said Mr. Gawaine. "She must be one of the racers in the sacks, who had set off before we came."

The "bit of womanhood" was our old acquaintance Bessy Cranage, otherwise Chad's Bess, whose large red cheeks and blowsy person had undergone an exaggeration of color, which, if she had happened to be a heavenly body, would have made her sublime. Bessy, I am sorry to say, had taken to her ear-rings again since Dinah's departure, and was otherwise decked out in such small finery as she could muster. Any one who could have looked into poor Bessy's heart would have seen a striking resemblance between her little hopes and anxieties and Hetty's. The advantage, perhaps, would have been on Bessy's side in the matter of feeling. But then, you see, they were so very different outside! You would have been inclined to box Bessy's ears, and you would have longed to kiss Hetty.

Bessy had been tempted to run the arduous race, partly from mere hoidenish gayety, partly because of the prize. Some one had said there were to be cloaks and other nice clothes for prizes, and she approached the marquee, fanning herself with her handkerchief, but with exultation sparkling in her round eyes.

"Here is the prize for the first sack-race," said Miss Lydia, taking a large parcel from the table where the prizes were laid, and giving it to Mrs. Irwine before Bessy came up; "an excellent grogram gown and a piece of flannel."

"You didn't think the winner was to be so young, I suppose, aunt?" said Arthur. "Couldn't you find something else for this girl, and save that grim-looking gown for one of the older women?"

"I have bought nothing but what is useful and substantial," said Miss Lydia, adjusting her own lace; "I should not think of encouraging a love of finery in young women of that class. I have a scarlet cloak, but that is for the old woman who wins."

This speech of Miss Lydia's produced rather a mocking expression in Mrs. Irwine's face as she looked at Arthur, while Bessy came up and dropped a series of courtesies.

"This is Bessy Cranage, mother," said Mr. Irwine, kindly, "Chad Cranage's daughter. You remember Chad Cranage, the blacksmith?"

"Yes, to be sure," said Mrs. Irwine. "Well, Bessy, here is

your prize — excellent warm things for winter. I'm sure you have had hard work to win them this warm day."

Bessy's lip fell as she saw the ugly, heavy gown, — which felt so hot and disagreeable, too, on this July day, and was such a great ugly thing to carry. She dropped her courtesies again, without looking up, and with a growing tremulousness about the corners of her mouth, and then turned away.

"Poor girl," said Arthur; "I think she's disappointed. I wish it had been something more to her taste."

"She's a bold-looking young person," observed Miss Lydia. "Not at all one I should like to encourage."

Arthur silently resolved that he would make Bessy a present of money before the day was over, that she might buy something more to her mind; but she, not awared of the consolation in store for her, turned out of the open space, where she was visible from the marquee, and throwing down the odious bundle under a tree, began to cry — very much tittered at the while by the small boys. In this situation she was descried by her discreet matronly cousin, who lost no time in coming up, having just given the baby into her husband's charge.

"What's the matter wi' ye?" said Bess the matron, taking up the bundle and examining it. "Ye'n sweltered yoursen, I reckon, running that fool's race. An' here, they'n gi'en you lots o' good grogram and flannel, as should ha' been gi'en by good rights to them as had the sense to keep away from such foolery. Ye might spare me a bit o' this grogram to make clothes for the lad — ye war ne'er ill-natured, Bess; I ne'er said that on ye."

"Ye may take it all, for what I care," said Bess the maiden, with a pettish movement, beginning to wipe away her tears and recover herself.

"Well, I could do wi't, if so be ye want to get rid on't," said the disinterested cousin, walking quickly away with the bundle, lest Chad's Bess should change her mind.

But that bonny-cheeked lass was blessed with an elasticity of spirits that scoured her from any rankling grief; and by the time the grand climax of the donkey-race came on, her disappointment was entirely lost in the delightful excitement of attempting to stimulate the last donkey by hisses, while the boys applied the argument of sticks. But the strength of the donkey mind lies in adopting a course inversely as the arguments urged, which, well considered, requires as great a mental force as the direct sequence; and the present donkey

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proved the first-rate order of his intelligence by coming to a dead standstill just when the blows were thickest. Great was the shouting of the crowd, radiant the grinning of Bill Downes the stone-sawyer and the fortunate rider of this superior beast, which stood calm and stiff-legged in the midst of its triumph.

Arthur himself had provided the prizes for the men, and Bill was made happy with a splendid pocket-knife, supplied with blades and gimlets enough to make a man at home on a desert island. He had hardly returned from the marquee with the prize in his hand, when it began to be understood that Wiry Ben proposed to amuse the company, before the gentry went to dinner, with an impromptu and gratuitous performance — namely, a hornpipe, the main idea of which was doubtless borrowed; but this was to be developed by the dancer in so peculiar and complex a manner that no one could deny him the praise of originality. Wiry Ben's pride in his dancing — an accomplishment productive of great effect at the yearly Wake — had needed only slightly elevating by an extra quantity of good ale, to convince him that the gentry would be very much struck with his performance of the hornpipe; and he had been decidedly encouraged in this idea by Joshua Rann, who observed that it was nothing but right to do something to please the young Squire, in return for what he had done for them. You will be the less surprised at this opinion in so grave a personage when you learn that Ben had requested Mr. Rann to accompany him on the fiddle, and Joshua felt quite sure that though there might not be much in the dancing, the music would make up for it. Adam Bede, who was present in one of the large marquees, where the plan was being discussed, told Ben he had better not make a fool of himself — a remark which at once fixed Ben's determination: he was not going to let anything alone because Adam Bede turned up his nose at it.

"What's this, what's this?" said old Mr. Donnithorne. "Is it something you've arranged, Arthur? Here's the clerk coming with his fiddle, and a smart fellow with a nosegay in his button-hole."

"No," said Arthur; "I know nothing about it. By Jove, he's going to dance! It's one of the carpenters — I forget his name at this moment."

"It's Ben Cranage — Wiry Ben, they call him," said Mr. Irwine; "rather a loose fish, I think. Anne, my dear, I see that fiddle-scraping is too much for you: you're getting tired. Let me take you in now, that you may rest till dinner."

Miss Anne rose assentingly, and the good brother took her away, while Joshua's preliminary scrapings burst into the "White Cockade," from which he intended to pass to a variety of tunes, by a series of transitions which his good ear really taught him to execute with some skill. It would have been an exasperating fact to him, if he had known it, that the general attention was too thoroughly absorbed by Ben's dancing for any one to give much heed to the music.

Have you ever seen a real English rustic perform a solo dance? Perhaps you have only seen a ballet rustic, smiling like a merry countryman in crockery, with graceful turns of the haunch and insinuating movements of the head. That is as much like the real thing as the "Bird Waltz" is like the song of birds. Wiry Ben never smiled: he looked as serious as a dancing monkey — as serious as if he had been an experimental philosopher ascertaining in his own person the amount of shaking and the varieties of angularity that could be given to the human limbs.

To make amends for the abundant laughter in the striped marquee, Arthur clapped his hands continually and cried "Bravo!" But Ben had one admirer whose eyes followed his movements with a fervid gravity that equalled his own. It was Martin Poyser, who was seated on a bench, with Tommy between his legs.

"What dost think o' that?" he said to his wife. "He goes as pat to the music as if he was made o' clockwork. I used to be a pretty good 'un at dancing myself when I was lighter, but I could niver ha' hit it just to th' hair like that."

"It's little matter what his limbs are, to my thinking," returned Mrs. Poyser. "He's empty enough i' the upper story, or he'd niver come jigging an' stamping i' that way, like a mad grasshopper, for the gentry to look at him. They're fit to die wi' laughing, I can see."

"Well, well, so much the better, it amuses 'em," said Mr. Poyser, who did not easily take an irritable view of things. "But they're going away now, t' have their dinner, I reckon. We'll move about a bit, shall we? and see what Adam Bede's doing. He's got to look after the drinking and things: I doubt he hasna had much fun."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE DANCE.

ARTHUR had chosen the entrance-hall for the ball-room: very wisely, for no other room could have been so airy, or would have had the advantage of the wide doors opening into the garden, as well as a ready entrance into the other rooms. To be sure, a stone floor was not the pleasantest to dance on, but then, most of the dancers had known what it was to enjoy a Christmas dance on kitchen quarries. It was one of those entrance-halls which make the surrounding rooms look like closets — with stucco angels, trumpets, and flower-wreaths on the lofty ceiling, and great medallions of miscellaneous heroes on the walls, alternating with statues in niches. Just the sort of place to be ornamented well with green boughs, and Mr. Craig had been proud to show his taste and his hot-house plants on the occasion. The broad steps of the stone staircase were covered with cushions to serve as seats for the children, who were to stay till half-past nine with the servant-maids, to see the dancing; and as this dance was confined to the chief tenants, there was abundant room for every one. The lights were charmingly disposed in colored-paper lamps, high up among green boughs, and the farmers' wives and daughters, as they peeped in, believed no scene could be more splendid; they knew now quite well in what sort of rooms the king and queen lived, and their thoughts glanced with some pity towards cousins and acquaintances who had not this fine opportunity of knowing how things went on in the great world. The lamps were already lit, though the sun had not long set, and there was that calm light out of doors in which we seem to see all objects more distinctly than in the broad day.

It was a pretty scene outside the house: the farmers and their families were moving about the lawn, among the flowers and shrubs, or along the broad straight road leading from the east front, where a carpet of mossy grass spread on each side, studded here and there with a dark flat-boughed cedar, or a grand pyramidal fir sweeping the ground with its branches, all tipped with a fringe of paler green. The groups of cottagers

in the park were gradually diminishing, the young ones being attracted towards the lights that were beginning to gleam from the windows of the gallery in the abbey, which was to be their dancing-room, and some of the sober elder ones thinking it time to go home quietly. One of these was Lisbeth Bede, and Seth went with her — not from filial attention only, for his conscience would not let him join in dancing. It had been rather a melancholy day to Seth: Dinah had never been more constantly present with him than in this scene, where everything was so unlike her. He saw her all the more vividly after looking at the thoughtless faces and gay-colored dresses of the young women — just as one feels the beauty and the greatness of a pictured Madonna the more, when it has been for a moment screened from us by a vulgar head in a bonnet. But this presence of Dinah in his mind only helped him to bear the better with his mother's mood, which had been becoming more and more querulous for the last hour. Poor Lisbeth was suffering from a strange conflict of feelings. Her joy and pride in the honor paid to her darling son Adam was beginning to be worsted in the conflict with the jealousy and fretfulness which had revived when Adam came to tell her that Captain Donnithorne desired him to join the dances in the hall. Adam was getting more and more out of her reach; she wished all the old troubles back again, for then it mattered more to Adam what his mother said and did.

"Eh, it's fine talkin' o' dancin'," she said, "an' thy father not a five week in's grave. An' I wish I war there too, istid o' bein' left to take up merrier folks's room above ground."

"Nay, don't look at it i' that way, mother," said Adam, who was determined to be gentle to her to-day. "I don't mean to dance — I shall only look on. And since the Captain wishes me to be there, it 'ud look as if I thought I knew better than him to say as I'd rather not stay. And thee know'st how he's behaved to me to-day."

"Eh, thee't do as thee lik'st, for thy old mother's got no right t' hinder thee. She's nought but th' old husk, and thee'st slipped away from her, like the ripe nut."

"Well, mother," said Adam, "I'll go and tell the Captain as it hurts thy feelings for me to stay, and I'd rather go home upo' that account: he won't take it ill then, I dare say, and I'm willing." He said this with some effort, for he really longed to be near Hetty this evening.

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and Seth 'ull go whome. I know it's a grit honor for thee to be so looked on — an' who's to be prouder on it nor thy mother? Hadna she the cumber o' rearin' thee an' doin' for thee all these 'ears?"

"Well, good-by, then, mother — good-by, lad — remember Gyp when you get home," said Adam, turning away towards the gate of the pleasure-grounds, where he hoped he might be able to join the Poyzers, for he had been so occupied throughout the afternoon that he had had no time to speak to Hetty. His eye soon detected a distant group, which he knew to be the right one, returning to the house along the broad gravel road, and he hastened on to meet them.

"Why, Adam, I'm glad to get sight on y' again," said Mr. Poyser, who was carrying Totty on his arm. "You're going t' have a bit o' fun, I hope, now your work's all done. And here's Hetty has promised no end o' partners, an' I've just been askin' her if she'd agreed to dance wi' you, an' she says no."

"Well, I didn't think o' dancing to-night," said Adam, already tempted to change his mind, as he looked at Hetty.

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Poyser. "Why, everybody's goin' to dance to-night, all but th' old Squire and Mrs. Irwine. Mrs. Best's been tellin' us as Miss Lyddy and Miss Irwine 'ull dance, an' the young Squire 'ull pick my wife for his first partner, t' open the ball: so she'll be forced to dance, though she's laid by ever sin' the Christmas afore the little un was born. You canna for shame stand still, Adam, an' you a fine young fellow, and can dance as well as anybody."

"Nay, nay," said Mrs. Poyser, "it 'ud be unbecomin'. I know the dancin's nonsense; but if you stick at everything because it's nonsense, you wouna go far i' this life. When your broth's ready-made for you, you mun swallow the thick-enin', or else let the broth alone."

"Then if Hetty 'ull dance with me," said Adam, yielding either to Mrs. Poyser's argument or to something else, "I'll dance whichever dance she's free."

"I've got no partner for the fourth dance," said Hetty; "I'll dance that with you, if you like."

"Ah," said Mr. Poyser, "but you mun dance the first dance, Adam, else it'll look partic'ler. There's plenty o' nice partners to pick an' choose from, an' it's hard for the gells when the men stan' by and don't ask 'em."

Adam felt the justice of Mr. Poyser's observation: it would not do for him to dance with no one besides Hetty; and re-

membering that Jonathan Burge had some reason to feel hurt to-day, he resolved to ask Miss Mary to dance with him the first dance, if she had no other partner.

"There's the big clock strikin' eight," said Mr. Poyser; "we must make haste in now, else the Squire and the ladies 'll be in afore us, an' that wouldna look well."

When they had entered the hall, and the three children under Molly's charge had been seated on the stairs, the folding-doors of the drawing-room were thrown open, and Arthur entered in his regimentals, leading Mrs. Irwine to a carpet-covered dais ornamented with hothouse plants, where she and Miss Aune were to be seated with old Mr. Donnuithorne, that they might look on at the dancing, like the kings and queens in the plays. Arthur had put on his uniform to please the tenants, he said, who thought as much of his militia dignity as if it had been an elevation to the premiership. He had not the least objection to gratify them in that way: his uniform was very advantageous to his figure.

The old Squire, before sitting down, walked round the hall to greet the tenants and make polite speeches to the wives: he was always polite; but the farmers had found out, after long puzzling, that this polish was one of the signs of hardness. It was observed that he gave his most elaborate civility to Mrs. Poyser to-night, inquiring particularly about her health, recommending her to strengthen herself with cold water as he did, and avoid all drugs. Mrs. Poyser courtesied and thanked him with great self-command, but when he had passed on, she whispered to her husband, "I'll lay my life he's brewin' some nasty turn against us. Old Harry doesna wag his tail so for nothin'." Mr. Poyser had no time to answer, for now Arthur came up and said, "Mrs. Poyser, I'm come to request the favor of your hand for the first dance; and, Mr. Poyser, you must let me take you to my aunt, for she claims you as her partner."

The wife's pale cheek flushed with a nervous sense of unwonted honor as Arthur led her to the top of the room; but Mr. Poyser, to whom an extra glass had restored his youthful confidence in his good looks and good dancing, walked along with them quite proudly, secretly flattering himself that Miss Lydia had never had a partner in *her* life who could lift her off the ground as he would. In order to balance the honors given to the two parishes, Miss Irwine danced with Luke Britton, the largest Broxton farmer, and Mr. Gawaine led out Mrs. Britton. Mr. Irwine, after seating his sister



Anne, had gone to the abbey gallery, as he had agreed with Arthur beforehand, to see how the merriment of the cottagers was prospering. Meanwhile, all the less distinguished couples had taken their places: Hetty was led out by the inevitable Mr. Craig, and Mary Burge by Adam; and now the music struck up, and the glorious country-dance, best of all dances, began.

Pity it was not a boarded floor! Then the rhythmic stamping of the thick shoes would have been better than any drums. That merry stamping, that gracious nodding of the head, that waving bestowal of the hand—where can we see them now? That simple dancing of well-covered matrons, laying aside for an hour the cares of house and dairy, remembering but not affecting youth, not jealous but proud of the young maidens by their side—that holiday sprightliness of portly husbands paying little compliments to their wives, as if their courting days were come again—those lads and lasses a little confused and awkward with their partners, having nothing to say—it would be a pleasant variety to see all that sometimes, instead of low dresses and large skirts, and scanning glances exploring costumes, and languid men in lacerated boots smiling with double meaning.

There was but one thing to mar Martin Poyser's pleasure in this dance: it was, that he was always in close contact with Luke Britton, that slovenly farmer. He thought of throwing a little glazed coldness into his eye in the crossing of hands; but then, as Miss Irwine was opposite to him instead of the offensive Luke, he might freeze the wrong person. So he gave his face up to hilarity, unchilled by moral judgments.

How Hetty's heart beat as Arthur approached her! He had hardly looked at her to-day: now he *must* take her hand. Would he press it? would he look at her? She thought she would cry if he gave her no sign of feeling. Now he was there—he had taken her hand—yes, he was pressing it. Hetty turned pale as she looked up at him for an instant and met his eyes, before the dance carried him away. That pale look came upon Arthur like the beginning of a dull pain, which clung to him, though he must dance and smile and joke all the same. Hetty would look so, when he told her what he had to tell her; and he should never be able to bear it—he should be a fool and give way again. Hetty's look did not really mean so much as he thought: it was only the sign of a struggle between the desire for him to notice her, and the dread lest she should betray the desire to others. But Hetty's

face had a language that transcended her feelings. There are faces which nature charges with a meaning and pathos not belonging to the single human soul that flutters beneath them, but speaking the joys and sorrows of foregone generations — eyes that tell of deep love which doubtless has been and is somewhere, but not paired with these eyes — perhaps paired with pale eyes that can say nothing; just as a national language may be instinct with poetry unfelt by the lips that use it. That look of Hetty's oppressed Arthur with a dread which yet had something of a terrible unconfessed delight in it, that she loved him too well. There was a hard task before him, for at that moment he felt he would have given up three years of his youth for the happiness of abandoning himself without remorse to his passion for Hetty.


These were the incongruous thoughts in his mind as he led Mrs. Poyser, who was panting with fatigue, and secretly resolving that neither judge nor jury should force her to dance another dance, to take a quiet rest in the dining-room, where supper was laid out for the guests to come and take it as they chose.

"I've desired Hetty to remember as she's got to dance wi' you, sir," said the good innocent woman; "for she's so thoughtless, she'd be like enough to go an' engage herself for every dance. So I told her not to promise too many."

"Thank you, Mrs. Poyser," said Arthur, not without a twinge. "Now, sit down in this comfortable chair, and here is Mills ready to give you what you would like best."

He hurried away to seek another matronly partner, for due honor must be paid to the married women before he asked any of the young ones; and the country-dances, and the stamping, and the gracious nodding, and the waving of the hands, went on joyously.

At last the time had come for the fourth dance — longed for by the strong, grave Adam, as if he had been a delicate-handed youth of eighteen; for we are all very much alike when we are in our first love; and Adam had hardly ever touched Hetty's hand for more than a transient greeting — had never danced with her but once before. His eyes had followed her eagerly to-night in spite of himself, and had taken in deeper draughts of love. He thought she behaved so prettily, so quietly; she did not seem to be flirting at all, she smiled less than usual; there was almost a sweet sadness about her. "God bless her!" he said inwardly; "I'd make her life a happy 'un, if a strong arm to work for her, and a heart to love her, could do it."



And then there stole over him delicious thoughts of coming home from work, and drawing Hetty to his side, and feeling her cheek softly pressed against his, till he forgot where he was, and the music and the tread of feet might have been the falling of rain and the roaring of the wind, for what he knew.

But now the third dance was ended, and he might go up to her and claim her hand. She was at the far end of the hall near the staircase, whispering with Molly, who had just given the sleeping Totty into her arms, before running to fetch shawls and bounnets from the landing. Mrs. Poyser had taken the two boys away into the dining-room to give them some cake before they went home in the cart with grandfather, and Molly was to follow as fast as possible.

"Let me hold her," said Adam, as Molly turned up-stairs: "the children are so heavy when they're asleep."

Hetty was glad of the relief, for to hold Totty in her arms, standing, was not at all a pleasant variety to her. But this second transfer had the unfortunate effect of rousing Totty, who was not behind any child of her age in peevishness at an unseasonable awakening. While Hetty was in the act of placing her in Adam's arms, and had not yet withdrawn her own, Totty opened her eyes, and forthwith fought out with her left fist at Adam's arm, and with her right caught at the string of brown beads round Hetty's neck. The locket leaped out from her frock, and the next moment the string was broken, and Hetty, helploss, saw beads and locket scattered wide on the floor.

"My locket, my locket!" she said, in a loud frightened whisper to Adam; "never mind the beads."

Adam had already seen where the locket fell, for it had attracted his glance as it leaped out of her frock. It had fallen on the raised wooden dais where the band sat, not on the stone floor; and as Adam picked it up, he saw the glass with the dark and light locks of hair under it. It had fallen that side upwards, so the glass was not broken. He turned it over on his hand, and saw the enamelled gold back.

"It isn't hurt," he said, as he held it towards Hetty, who was unable to take it because both her hands were occupied with Totty.

"Oh, it doesn't matter, I don't mind about it," said Hetty, who had been pale and was now red.

"Not matter?" said Adam, gravely. "You seemed very frightened about it. I'll hold it till yon're ready to take it," he added, quietly closing his hand over it, that she might not think he wanted to look at it again.

By this time Molly had come with bonnet and shawl, and as soon as she had taken Totty, Adam placed the locket in Hetty's hand. She took it with an air of indifference, and put it in her pocket; in her heart vexed and angry with Adam, because he had seen it, but determined now that she would show no more signs of agitation.

"See," she said, "they're taking their places to dance; let us go."

Adam assented silently. A puzzled alarm had taken possession of him. Had Hetty a lover he didn't know of? — for none of her relations, he was sure, would give her a locket like that; and none of her admirers, with whom he was acquainted, was in the position of an accepted lover, as the giver of that locket must be. Adam was lost in the utter impossibility of finding any person for his fears to alight on; he could only feel with a terrible pang that there was something in Hetty's life unknown to him; that while he had been rocking himself in the hope that she would come to love him, she was already loving another. The pleasure of the dance with Hetty was gone; his eyes, when they rested on her, had an uneasy questioning expression in them; he could think of nothing to say to her; and she, too, was out of temper and disinclined to speak. They were both glad when the dance was ended.

Adam was determined to stay no longer; no one wanted him, and no one would notice if he slipped away. As soon as he got out of doors, he began to walk at his habitual rapid pace, hurrying along without knowing why, busy with the painful thought that the memory of this day, so full of honor and promise to him, was poisoned forever. Suddenly, when he was far on through the Chase, he stopped, startled by a flash of reviving hope. After all, he might be a fool, making a great misery out of a trifle. Hetty, fond of finery as she was, might have bought the thing herself. It looked too expensive for that — it looked like the things on white satin in the great jeweller's shop at Rosseter. But Adam had very imperfect notions of the value of such things, and he thought it could certainly not cost more than a guinea. Perhaps Hetty had had as much as that in Christmas boxes, and there was no knowing but she might have been childish enough to spend it in that way; she was such a young thing, and she couldn't help loving finery; But then, why had she been so frightened about it at first, and changed color so, and afterwards pretended not to care? Oh, that was because she was ashamed of his seeing that she had such a smart thing — she was conscious

that it was wrong for her to spend her money on it, and she knew that Adam disapproved of finery. It was a proof she cared about what he liked and disliked. She must have thought from his silence and gravity afterwards that he was very much displeased with her, that he was inclined to be harsh and severe towards her foibles. And as he walked on more quietly, chewing the end of this new hope, his only uneasiness was that he had behaved in a way which might chill Hetty's feeling towards him. For this last view of the matter *must* be the true one. How could Hetty have an accepted lover, quite unknown to him? She was never away from her uncle's house for more than a day; she could have no acquaintances that did not come there, and no intimacies unknown to her uncle and aunt. It would be folly to believe that the locket was given to her by a lover. The little ring of dark hair he felt sure was her own; he could form no guess about the light hair under it, for he had not seen it very distinctly. It might be a bit of her father's or mother's, who had died when she was a child, and she would naturally put a bit of her own along with it.

And so Adam went to bed comforted, having woven for himself an ingenious web of probabilities—the surest screen a wise man can place between himself and the truth. His last waking thoughts melted into a dream that he was with Hetty again at the Hall Farm, and that he was asking her to forgive him for being so cold and silent.

And while he was dreaming this, Arthur was leading Hetty to the dance, and saying to her in low hurried tones, "I shall be in the wood the day after to-morrow at seven; come as early as you can." And Hetty's foolish joys and hopes, which had flown away for a little space, scared by a mere nothing, now all came fluttering back, unconscious of the real peril. She was happy for the first time this long day, and wished that dance would last for hours. Arthur wished it too; it was the last weakness he meant to indulge in; and a man never lies with more delicious languor under the influence of a passion, than when he has persuaded himself that he shall subdue it to-morrow.

But Mrs. Poyser's wishes were quite the reverse of this, for her mind was filled with dreary forebodings as to the retardation of to-morrow morning's cheese in consequence of these late hours. Now that Hetty had done her duty and danced one dance with the young Squire, Mr. Poyser must go out and see if the cart was come back to fetch them, for it was half-

past ten o'clock, and notwithstanding a mild suggestion on his part that it would be bad manners for them to be the first to go, Mrs. Poyser was resolute on the point, "manners or no manners."

"What! going already, Mrs. Poyser?" said old Mr. Donni-thorne, as she came to courtesy and take leave; "I thought we should not part with any of our guests till eleven: Mrs. Irwine and I, who are elderly people, think of sitting out the dance till then."

"Oh, your honor, it's all right and proper for gentlefolks to stay up by candle-light—they've got no cheese on their minds. We're late enough as it is, an' there's no lettin' the cows know as they mustn't want to be milked so early to-morrow mornin'. So, if you'll please t' excuse us, we'll take our leave."

"Eh!" she said to her husband, as they set off in the cart, "I'd sooner ha' brewin' day and washin' day together than one o' these pleasin' days. There's no work so trin' as daughin' about an' starin' an' not rightly knowin' what you're goin' to do next; and keepin' your face i' smilin' order like a grocer o' market-day for fear people shouldna think you civil enough. An' you've nothing to show for't when it's done, if it isn't a yallow face wi' eatin' things as disagree."

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Poyser, who was in his merriest mood, and felt that he had had a great day, "a bit o' pleasuring's good for thee sometimes. An' thee dane'st as well as any of 'em, for I'll back thee against all the wives i' the parish for a light foot an' ankle. An' it was a great honor for the young Squire to ask thee first—I reckon it was because I sat at th' head o' the table an' made the speech. An' Hetty too—*she* never had such a partner before—a fine young gentleman in reg'mentals. It'll serve you to talk on, Hetty, when you're an old woman—how you danced wi' th' young Squire the day he come o' age."

## BOOK IV.

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### CHAPTER XXVII.

#### A CRISIS.

It was beyond the middle of August — nearly three weeks after the birthday feast. The reaping of the wheat had begun in our north midland county of Loamshire, but the harvest was likely still to be retarded by the heavy rains, which were causing inundations and much damage throughout the country. From this last trouble the Broxton and Hayslope farmers, on their pleasant uplands, and in their brook-watered valleys, had not suffered, and as I cannot pretend that they were such exceptional farmers as to love the general good better than their own, you will infer that they were not in very low spirits about the rapid rise in the price of bread, so long as there was hope of gathering in their own corn undamaged; and occasional days of sunshine and drying winds flattered this hope.

The eighteenth of August was one of these days, when the sunshine looked brighter in all eyes for the gloom that went before. Grand masses of cloud were hurried across the blue, and the great round hills behind the Chase seemed alive with their flying shadows; the sun was hidden for a moment, and then shone out warm again like a recovered joy; the leaves, still green, were tossed off the hedgerow trees by the wind; around the farmhouses there was a sound of clapping doors; the apples fell in the orchards; and the stray horses on the green sides of the lanes and on the common had their manes blown about their faces. And yet the wind seemed only part of the general gladness because the sun was shining. A merry day for the children, who ran and shouted to see if they could top the wind with their voices; and the grown-up people, too, were in good spirits, inclined to believe in yet finer days, when the wind had fallen. If only the corn were not ripe enough to be blown out of the husk and scattered as untimely seed!

And yet a day on which a blighting sorrow may fall upon a man. For if it be true that Nature at certain moments seems charged with a presentiment of one individual lot, must it not also be true that she seems unmindful, unconscious of another? For there is no hour that has not its births of gladness and despair, no morning brightness that does not bring new sickness to desolation as well as new forces to genius and love. There are so many of us, and our lots are so different: what wonder that Nature's mood is often in harsh contrast with the great crisis of our lives? We are children of a large family, and must learn, as such children do, not to expect that our hurts will be made much of—to be content with little nurture and caressing, and help each other the more.

It was a busy day with Adam, who of late had done almost double work; for he was continuing to act as foreman for Jonathan Burge, until some satisfactory person could be found to supply his place, and Jonathan was slow to find that person. But he had done the extra work cheerfully, for his hopes were buoyant again about Hetty. Every time she had seen him since the birthday, she had seemed to make an effort to behave all the more kindly to him, that she might make him understand she had forgiven his silence and coldness during the dance. He had never mentioned the locket to her again; too happy that she smiled at him—still happier because he observed in her a more subdued air, something that he interpreted as the growth of womanly tenderness and seriousness. "Ah!" he thought, again and again, "she's only seventeen; she'll be thoughtful enough after a while. And her aunt allays says how clever she is at the work. She'll make a wife as mother'll have no occasion to grumble at, after all." To be sure, he had only seen her at home twice since the birthday; for one Sunday, when he was intending to go from church to the Hall Farm, Hetty had joined the party of upper servants from the Chase, and had gone home with them—almost as if she were inclined to encourage Mr. Craig. "She's takin' too much likin' to them folks i' the housekeeper's room," Mrs. Poyser remarked. "For my part, I was never over-fond o' gentlefolks's servants—they're mostly like the fine ladies' fat dogs, nayther good for barking nor butcher's meat, but on'y for show." And another evening she was gone to Treddleston to buy some things; though, to his great surprise, as he was returning home, he saw her at a distance getting over a stile quite out of the Treddleston road. But, when he hastened to her, she



was very kind, and asked him to go in again when he had taken her to the yard gate. She had gone a little farther into the fields after coming from Treddleston, because she didn't want to go in, she said: it was so nice to be out of doors, and her aunt always made such a fuss about it if she wanted to go out. "Oh, do come in with me!" she said, as he was going to shake hands with her at the gate, and he could not resist that. So he went in, and Mrs. Poyser was contented with only a slight remark on Hetty's being later than was expected; while Hetty, who had looked out of spirits when he met her, smiled and talked, and waited on them all with unusual promptitude.

That was the last time he had seen her; but he meant to make leisure for going to the Farm to-morrow. To-day, he knew, was her day for going to the Chase to sew with the lady's-maid, so he would get as much work done as possible this evening, that the next might be clear.

One piece of work that Adam was superintending was some slight repairs at the Chase Farm, which had been hitherto occupied by Satchell, as bailiff, but which it was now rumored that the old Squire was going to let to a smart man in top-boots, who had been seen to ride over it one day. Nothing but the desire to get a tenant could account for the Squire's undertaking repairs, though the Saturday-evening party at Mr. Casson's agreed over their pipes that no man in his senses would take the Chase Farm unless there was a bit more ploughland laid to it. However that might be, the repairs were ordered to be executed with all despatch; and Adam, acting for Mr. Burge, was carrying out the order with his usual energy. But to-day, having been occupied elsewhere, he had not been able to arrive at the Chase Farm till late in the afternoon; and he then discovered that some old roofing, which he had calculated on preserving, had given way. There was clearly no good to be done with this part of the building without pulling it all down; and Adam immediately saw in his mind a plan for building it up again, so as to make the most convenient of cow-sheds and calf-pens, with a hovel for implements; and all without any great expense for materials. So, when the workmen were gone, he sat down, took out his pocket-book, and busied himself with sketching a plan, and making a specification of the expenses, that he might show it to Burge the next morning, and set him on persuading the Squire to consent. To "make a good job" of anything, however small, was always a pleasure to Adam; and he sat on a

block, with his book resting on a planing-table, whistling low every now and then, and turning his head on one side with a just perceptible smile of gratification — of pride, too, for if Adam loved a bit of good work, he loved also to think, "I did it!" And I believe the only people who are free from that weakness are those who have no work to call their own. It was nearly seven before he had finished and put on his jacket again; and on giving a last look round, he observed that Seth, who had been working here to-day, had left his basket of tools behind him. "Why, th' lad's forgot his tools," thought Adam, "and he's got to work up at the shop to-morrow. There never was such a chap for wool-gathering; he'd leave his head behind him, if it was loose. However, it's lucky I've seen 'em; I'll carry 'em home."

The buildings of the Chase Farm lay at one extremity of the Chase, at about ten minutes' walking distance from the Abbey. Adam had come thither on his pony, intending to ride to the stables, and put up his nag on his way home. At the stables he encountered Mr. Craig, who had come to look at the Captain's new horse, on which he was to ride away the day after to-morrow; and Mr. Craig detained him to tell how all the servants were to collect at the gate of the courtyard to wish the young Squire luck as he rode out; so that by the time Adam had got into the Chase, and was striding along with the basket of tools over his shoulder, the sun was on the point of setting, and was sending level crimson rays among the great trunks of the old oaks, and touching every bare patch of ground with a transient glory, that made it look like a jewel dropped upon the grass. The wind had fallen now, and there was only enough breeze to stir the delicate-stemmed leaves. Any one who had been sitting in the house all day would have been glad to walk now; but Adam had been quite enough in the open air to wish to shorten his way home; and he bethought himself that he might do so by striking across the Chase and going through the grove, where he had never been for years. He hurried on across the Chase, stalking along the narrow paths between the fern, with Gyp at his heels, not lingering to watch the magnificent changes of the light — hardly once thinking of it — yet feeling its presence in a certain calm happy awe which mingled itself with his busy working-day thoughts. How could he help feeling it? The very deer felt it, and were more timid.

Presently Adam's thoughts recurred to what Mr. Craig had said about Arthur Donnithorne, and pictured his going away.

and the changes that might take place before he came back; then they travelled back affectionately over the old scenes of boyish companionship, and dwelt on Arthur's good qualities, which Adam had a pride in, as we all have in the virtues of the superior who honors us. A nature like Adam's, with a great need of love and reverence in it, depends for so much of its happiness on what it can believe and feel about others! And he had no ideal world of dead heroes; he knew little of the life of men in the past; he must find the beings to whom he could cling with loving admiration among those who came within speech of him. These pleasant thoughts about Arthur brought a milder expression than usual into his keen rough face: perhaps they were the reason why, when he opened the old green gate leading into the Grove, he paused to pat Gyp, and say a kind word to him.

After that pause, he strode on again along the broad winding path through the Grove. What grand beeches! Arthur delighted in a fine tree of all things; as the fisherman's sight is keenest on the sea, so Adam's perceptions were more at home with trees than with other objects. He kept them in his memory, as a painter does, with all the flecks and knots in their bark, all the curves and angles of their boughs; and had often calculated the height and contents of a trunk to a nicety, as he stood looking at it. No wonder that, notwithstanding his desire to get on, he could not help pausing to look at a curious large beech, which he had seen standing before him at a turning in the road, and convince himself that it was not two trees wedded together, but only one. For the rest of his life he remembered that moment when he was calmly examining the beech, as a man remembers his last glimpse of the home where his youth was passed, before the road turned, and he saw it no more. The beech stood at the last turning before the Grove ended in an archway of boughs that let in the eastern light; and as Adam stepped away from the tree to continue his walk, his eyes fell on two figures about twenty yards before him.

He remained as motionless as a statue, and turned almost as pale. The two figures were standing opposite to each other, with clasped hands about to part; and while they were bending to kiss, Gyp, who had been running among the brushwood, came out, caught sight of them, and gave a sharp bark. They separated with a start—one hurried through the gate out of the Grove, and the other, turning round, walked slowly, with a sort of saunter, towards Adam, who still stood trans-

fixed and pale, clutching tighter the stick with which he held the basket of tools over his shoulder, and looking at the approaching figure with eyes in which amazement was fast turning to fierceness.

Arthur Donnithorne looked flushed and excited; he had tried to make unpleasant feelings more bearable by drinking a little more wine than usual at dinner to-day, and was still enough under its flattering influence to think more lightly of this unwished-for rencontre with Adam than he would otherwise have done. After all, Adam was the best person who could have happened to see him and Hetty together: he was a sensible fellow, and would not babble about it to other people. Arthur felt confident that he could laugh the thing off, and explain it away. And so he sauntered forward with elaborate carelessness — his flushed face, his evening dress of fine cloth and fine linen, his hands half thrust into his waistcoat pockets, all shone upon by the strange evening light which the light clouds had caught up even to the zenith, and were now shedding down between the topmost branches above him.

Adam was still motionless, looking at him as he came up. He understood it all now — the locket, and everything else that had been doubtful to him: a terrible scorching light showed him the hidden letters that changed the meaning of the past. If he had moved a muscle, he must inevitably have sprung upon Arthur like a tiger; and in the conflicting emotions that filled those long moments, he had told himself that he would not give loose to passion, he would only speak the right thing. He stood as if petrified by an unseen force, but the force was his own strong will.

"Well, Adam," said Arthur, "you've been looking at the fine old beeches, eh? They're not to be come near by the hatchet, though; this is a sacred grove. I overtook pretty little Hetty Sorrel as I was coming to my den — the Hermitage, there. She ought not to come home this way so late. So I took care of her to the gate, and asked for a kiss for my pains. But I must get back now, for this road is confoundedly damp. Good-night, Adam: I shall see you to-morrow — to say good-by, you know."

Arthur was too much preoccupied with the part he was playing himself to be thoroughly aware of the expression in Adam's face. He did not look directly at Adam, but glanced carelessly round at the trees, and then lifted up one foot to look at the sole of his boot. He cared to say no more;

he had thrown quite dust enough into honest Adam's eyes; and as he spoke the last words, he walked on.

"Stop a bit, sir," said Adam, in a hard peremptory voice, without turning round. "I've got a word to say to you."

Arthur paused in surprise. Susceptible persons are more affected by a change of tone than by unexpected words, and Arthur had the susceptibility of a nature at once affectionate and vain. He was still more surprised when he saw that Adam had not moved, but stood with his back to him, as if summoning him to return. What did he mean? He was going to make a serious business of this affair. Arthur felt his temper rising. A patronizing disposition always has its meaner side, and in the confusion of his irritation and alarm there entered the feeling that a man to whom he had shown so much favor as to Adam, was not in a position to criticise his conduct. And yet he was dominated, as one who feels himself in the wrong always is, by the man whose good opinion he cares for. In spite of pride and temper, there was as much deprecation as anger in his voice when he said, —

"What do you mean, Adam?"

"I mean, sir," answered Adam, in the same harsh voice, still without turning round, — "I mean, sir, that you don't deceive me by your light words. This is not the first time you've met Hetty Sorrel in this grove, and this is not the first time you've kissed her."

Arthur felt a startled uncertainty how far Adam was speaking from knowledge, and how far from mere inference. And this uncertainty, which prevented him from contriving a prudent answer, heightened his irritation. He said, in a high sharp tone —

"Well, sir, what then?"

"Why, then, instead of acting like th' upright, honorable man we've all believed you to be, you've been acting the part of a selfish light-minded scoundrel. You know, as well as I do, what it's to lead to, when a gentleman like you kisses and makes love to a young woman like Hetty, and gives her presents as she's frightened for other folks to see. And I say it again, you're acting the part of a selfish light-minded scoundrel, though it cuts me to th' heart to say so, and I'd rather ha' lost my right hand."

"Let me tell you, Adam," said Arthur, bridling his growing anger, and trying to recur to his careless tone, "you're not only devilishly impertinent, but you're talking nonsense. Every pretty girl is not such a fool as you, to suppose that

when a gentleman admires her beauty, and pays her a little attention, he must mean something particular. Every man likes to flirt with a pretty girl, and every pretty girl likes to be flirted with. The wider the distance between them the less harm there is, for then she's not likely to deceive herself."

"I don't know what you mean by flirting," said Adam, "but if you mean behaving to a woman as if you loved her, and yet not loving her all the while, I say that's not th' action of an honest man, and what isn't honest does come t' harm. I'm not a fool, and you're not a fool, and you know better than what you're saying. You know it couldn't be made public as you've behaved to Hetty as y' have done without her losing her character, and bringing shame and trouble on her and her relations. What if you meant nothing by your kissing and your presents? Other folks won't believe as you've meant nothing; and don't tell me about her not deceiving herself. I tell you as you've filled her mind so with the thought of you, as it'll mayhap poison her life; and she'll never love another man as 'ud make her a good husband."

Arthur had felt a sudden relief while Adam was speaking; he perceived that Adam had no positive knowledge of the past, and that there was no irrevocable damage done by this evening's unfortunate rencontre. Adam could still be deceived. The candid Arthur had brought himself into a position in which successful lying was his only hope. The hope allayed his anger a little.

"Well, Adam," he said, in a tone of friendly concession, "you're perhaps right. Perhaps I've gone a little too far in taking notice of the pretty little thing, and stealing a kiss now and then. You're such a grave, steady fellow, you don't understand the temptation to such trifling. I'm sure I wouldn't bring any trouble or annoyance on her and the good Poysers on any account if I could help it. But I think you look a little too seriously at it. You know I'm going away immediately, so I sha'n't make any more mistakes of the kind. But let us say good-night,"—Arthur here turned round to walk on,— "and talk no more about the matter. The whole thing will soon be forgotten."

"No, by God!" Adam burst out with rage that could be controlled no longer, throwing down the basket of tools, and striding forward till he was right in front of Arthur. All his jealousy and sense of personal injury, which he had been hitherto trying to keep under, had leaped up and mastered him. What man of us, in the first moments of a sharp agony,

could ever feel that the fellow-man who has been the medium of inflicting it, did not mean to hurt us? In our instinctive rebellion against pain, we are children again, and demand an active will to wreak our vengeance on. Adam at this moment could only feel that he had been robbed of Hetty — robbed treacherously by the man in whom he had trusted; and he stood close in front of Arthur, with fierce eyes glaring at him, with pale lips and clenched hands, the hard tones in which he had hitherto been constraining himself to express no more than a just indignation, giving way to a deep agitated voice that seemed to shake him as he spoke.

"No, it'll not be soon forgot, as you've come in between her and me, when she might ha' loved me — it'll not soon be forgot as you've robbed me o' my happiness, while I thought you was my best friend, and a noble-minded man, as I was proud to work for. And you've been kissing her, and meaning nothing, have you? And I never kissed her i' my life — but I'd ha' worked hard for years for the right to kiss her. And you make light of it. You think little o' doing what may damage other folks, so as you get your bit o' trifling, as means nothing. I throw back your favors, for you're not the man I took you for. I'll never count you my friend any more. I'd rather you'd act as my enemy, and fight me where I stand — it's all th' amends you can make me."

Poor Adam, possessed by rage that could find no other vent, began to throw off his coat and his cap, too blind with passion to notice the change that had taken place in Arthur while he was speaking. Arthur's lips were now as pale as Adam's; his heart was beating violently. The discovery that Adam loved Hetty was a shock which made him for the moment see himself in the light of Adam's indignation, and regard Adam's suffering as not merely a consequence, but an element of his error. The words of hatred and contempt — the first he had ever heard in his life — seemed like scorching missiles that were making ineffaceable scars on him. All screening self-exense, which rarely falls quite away while others respect us, forsook him for an instant, and he stood face to face with the first great irrevocable evil he had ever committed. He was only twenty-one — and three months ago — nay, much later — he had thought proudly that no man should ever be able to reproach him justly. His first impulse, if there had been time for it, would perhaps have been to utter words of propitiation; but Adam had no sooner thrown off his coat and cap, than he became aware that Arthur was standing pale and motionless, with his hands still thrust in his waistcoat pockets.

"What!" he said, "won't you fight me like a man? You know I won't strike you while you stand so."

"Go away, Adam," said Arthur, "I don't want to fight you."

"No," said Adam, bitterly; "you don't want to fight me, — you think I'm a common man, as you can injure without answering for it."

"I never meant to injure you," said Arthur, with returning anger. "I didn't know you loved her."

"But you've made her love *you*," said Adam. "You're a double-faced man — I'll never believe a word you say again."

"Go away, I tell you," said Arthur, angrily, "or we shall both repent."

"No," said Adam, with a convulsed voice, "I swear I won't go away without fighting you. Do you want provoking any more? I tell you you're a coward and a scoundrel, and I despise you."

The color had all rushed back to Arthur's face; in a moment his right hand was clenched, and dealt a blow like lightning, which sent Adam staggering backward. His blood was as thoroughly up as Adam's now, and the two men, forgetting the emotions that had gone before, fought with the instinctive fierceness of panthers in the deepening twilight darkened by the trees. The delicate-handed gentleman was a match for the workman in everything but strength, and Arthur's skill enabled him to protract the struggle for some long moments. But between unarmed men the battle is to the strong, where the strong is no blunderer, and Arthur must sink under a well-planted blow of Adam's, as a steel rod is broken by an iron bar. The blow soon came, and Arthur fell, his head lying concealed in a tuft of fern, so that Adam could only discern his darkly-clad body.

He stood still in the dim light waiting for Arthur to rise.

The blow had been given now, towards which he had been straining all the force of nerve and muscle — and what was the good of it? What had he done by fighting? Only satisfied his own passion, only wreaked his own vengeance. He had not rescued Hetty, nor changed the past — there it was just as it had been, and he sickened at the vanity of his own rage.

But why did not Arthur rise? He was perfectly motionless, and the time seemed long to Adam. . . . Good God! had the blow been too much for him? Adam shuddered at the thought of his own strength, as with the oncoming of this



dread he knolt down by Arthur's side and lifted his head from among the fern. There was no sign of life: the eyes and teeth were set. The horror that rushed over Adam completely mastered him, and forced upon him its own belief. He could feel nothing but that death was in Arthur's face, and that he was helpless before it. He made not a single movement, but knelt like an image of despair gazing at an image of death.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## A DILEMMA.

It was only a few minutes measured by the clock — though Adam always thought it had been a long while — before he perceived a gleam of consciousness in Arthur's face and a slight shiver through his frame. The intense joy that flooded his soul brought back some of the old affection with it.

"Do you feel any pain, sir?" he said, tenderly, loosening Arthur's cravat.

Arthur turned his eyes on Adam with a vague stare which gave way to a slightly startled motion as if from the shock of returning memory. But he only shivered again and said nothing.

"Do you feel any hurt, sir?" Adam said again, with a trembling in his voice.

Arthur put his hand up to his waistcoat buttons, and when Adam had unbuttoned it, he took a longer breath. "Lay my head down," he said, faintly, "and get me some water if you can."

Adam laid the head down gently on the fern again, and emptying the tools out of the flag-basket, hurried through the trees to the edge of the Grove bordering on the Chase, where a brook ran below the bank.

When he returned with his basket leaking, but still half full, Arthur looked at him with a more thoroughly re-awakened consciousness.

"Can you drink a drop out o' your hand, sir?" said Adam, kneeling down again to lift up Arthur's head.

"No," said Arthur, "dip my cravat in and souse it on my head."

The water seemed to do him some good, for he presently raised himself a little higher, resting on Adam's arm.

"Do you feel any hurt inside, sir?" Adam asked again.

"No—no hurt," said Arthur, still faintly, "but rather done up."

After a while he said, "I suppose I fainted away when you knocked me down."

"Yes, sir, thank God," said Adam. "I thought it was worse."

"What! you thought you'd done for me, eh? come, help me on my legs.

"I feel terribly shaky and dizzy," Arthur said, as he stood leaning on Adam's arm; "that blow of yours must have come against me like a battering-ram. I don't believe I can walk alone."

"Lean on me, sir; I'll get you along," said Adam. "Or, will you sit down a bit longer, on my coat here? and I'll prop y' up. You'll perhaps be better in a minute or two."

"No," said Arthur. "I'll go to the Hermitage—I think I've got some brandy there. There's a short road to it a little further on, near the gate. If you'll just help me on."

They walked slowly, with frequent pauses, but without speaking again. In both of them, the concentration in the present which had attended the first moments of Arthur's revival, had now given way to a vivid recollection of the previous scene. It was nearly dark in the narrow path among the trees, but within the circle of fir-trees round the Hermitage there was room for the growing moonlight to enter in at the windows. Their steps were noiseless on the thick carpet of fir-needles, and the outward stillness seemed to heighten their inward consciousness, as Arthur took the key out of his pocket and placed it in Adam's hand, for him to open the door. Adam had not known before that Arthur had furnished the old Hermitage and made it a retreat for himself, and it was a surprise to him when he opened the door to see a snug room with all the signs of frequent habitation.

Arthur loosed Adam's arm and threw himself on the ottoman. "You'll see my hunting-bottle somewhere," he said. "A leather case with a bottle and glass in."

Adam was not long in finding the case. "There's very little brandy in it, sir," he said, turning it downwards over the glass, as he held it before the window, "hardly this little glassful."

"Well, give me that," said Arthur, with the peevishness of physical depression. When he had taken some sips, Adam said, "Hadn't I better run to th' house, sir, and get some more

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"What! you thought you'd done for me, eh? come, help me on my legs."

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"Well, give me that," said Arthur, with the peevishness of physical depression. When he had taken some sips, Adam said, "Hain't I better run to th' house, sir, and get some more

brandy? I can be there and back pretty soon. It'll be a stiff walk home for you, if you don't have something to revive you."

"Yes — go. But don't say I'm ill. Ask for my man Pym, and tell him to get it from Mills, and not to say I'm at the Hermitage. Get some water too."

Adam was relieved to have an active task — both of them were relieved to be apart from each other for a short time. But Adam's swift pace could not still the eager pain of thinking — of living again with concentrated suffering through the last wretched hour, and looking out from it over all the new, sad future.

Arthur lay still for some minutes after Adam was gone, but presently he rose feebly from the ottoman and peered about slowly in the broken moonlight, seeking something. It was a short bit of wax candle that stood amongst a confusion of writing and drawing materials. There was more searching for the means of lighting the candle, and when that was done, he went cautiously round the room, as if wishing to assure himself of the presence or absence of something. At last he had found a slight thing, which he put first in his pocket, and then, on a second thought, took out again, and thrust deep down into a waste-paper basket. *It was a woman's little pink silk neckerchief.* He set the candle on the table, and threw himself down on the ottoman again, exhausted with the effort.

When Adam came back with his supplies, his entrance awoke Arthur from a doze.

"That's right," Arthur said; "I'm tremendously in want of some brandy-vigor."

"I'm glad to see you've got a light, sir," said Adam. "I've been thinking I'd better have asked for a lanthorn."

"No, no; the candle will last long enough — I shall soon be up to walking home now."

"I can't go before I've seen you safe home, sir," said Adam, hesitatingly.

"No: it will be better for you to stay — sit down."

Adam sat down, and they remained opposite to each other in uneasy silence, while Arthur slowly drank brandy-and-water with visibly renovating effect. He began to lie in a more voluntary position, and looked as if he were less overpowered by bodily sensations. Adam was keenly alive to these indications, and as his anxiety about Arthur's condition began to be allayed, he felt more of that impatience which every one knows who has had his just indignation suspended by the physical

state of the culprit. Yet there was one thing on his mind to be done before he could recur to remonstrance: it was to confess what had been unjust in his own words. Perhaps he longed all the more to make this confession, that his indignation might be free again; and as he saw the signs of returning ease in Arthur, the words again and again came to his lips and went back, checked by the thought that it would be better to leave everything till to-morrow. As long as they were silent they did not look at each other, and a foreboding came across Adam that if they began to speak as though they remembered the past — if they looked at each with full recognition — they must take fire again. So they sat in silence till the bit of wax candle flickered low in the socket; the silence all the while becoming more irksome to Adam. Arthur had just poured out some more brandy-and-water, and he threw one arm behind his head and drew up one leg in an attitude of recovered ease, which was an irresistible temptation to Adam to speak what was on his mind.

"You begin to feel more yourself again, sir," he said, as the candle went out, and they were half hidden from each other in the faint moonlight.

"Yes: I don't feel good for much — very lazy, and not inclined to move; but I'll go home when I've taken this dose."

There was a slight pause before Adam said —

"My temper got the better of me, and I said things as wasn't true. I'd no right to speak as if you'd known you was doing me an injury: you'd no grounds for knowing it; I've always kept what I felt for her as secret as I could."

He paused again before he went on.

"And perhaps I judged you too harsh — I'm apt to be harsh; and you may have acted out o' thoughtlessness more than I should ha' believed was possible for a man with a heart and a conscience. We're not all put together alike, and we may misjudge one another. God knows, it's all the joy I could have now, to think the best of you."

Arthur wanted to go home without saying any more — he was too painfully embarrassed in mind, as well as too weak in body, to wish for any further explanation to-night. And yet it was a relief to him that Adam reopened the subject in a way the least difficult for him to answer. Arthur was in the wretched position of an open, generous man, who has committed an error which makes deception seem a necessity. the native impulse to give truth in return for truth, to meet trust with frank confession, must be suppressed, and duty was

become a question of tactics. His deed was reacting upon him — was already governing him tyrannously, and forcing him into a course that jarred with his habitual feelings. The only aim that seemed admissible to him now was to deceive Adam to the utmost: to make Adam think better of him than he deserved. And when he heard the words of honest retraction — when he heard the sad appeal with which Adam ended — he was obliged to rejoice in the remains of ignorant confidence it implied. He did not answer immediately, for he had to be judicious and not truthful.

"Say no more about our anger, Adam," he said, at last, very languidly, for the labor of speech was unwelcome to him; "I forgive your momentary injustice — it was quite natural, with the exaggerated notions you had in your mind. We shall be none the worse friends in future, I hope, because we've fought: you had the best of it, and that was as it should be, for I believe I've been most in the wrong of the two. Come, let us shake hands."

Arthur held out his hand, but Adam sat still.

"I don't like to say 'No' to that, sir," he said, "but I can't shake hands till it's clear what we mean by't. I was wrong when I spoke as if you'd done me an injury knowingly, but I wasn't wrong in what I said before, about your behavior t' Hetty, and I can't shake hands with you as if I held you my friend the same as ever, till you've cleared that up better."

Arthur swallowed his pride and resentment as he drew back his hand. He was silent for some moments, and then said, as indifferently as he could —

"I don't know what you mean by clearing up, Adam. I've told you already that you think too seriously of a little flirtation. But if you are right in supposing there is any danger in it — I'm going away on Saturday, and there will be an end of it. As for the pain it has given you, I'm heartily sorry for it. I can say no more."

Adam said nothing, but rose from his chair, and stood with his face towards one of the windows, as if looking at the blackness of the moonlit fir-trees; but he was in reality conscious of nothing but the conflict within him. It was of no use now — his resolution not to speak till to-morrow: he must speak there and then. But it was several minutes before he turned round and stepped nearer to Arthur, standing and looking down on him as he lay.

"It'll be better for me to speak plain," he said, with evi-

dent effort, "though it's hard work. You see, sir, this isn't a trifle to me, whatever it may be to you. I'm none o' them men as can go making love first to one woman and then t'another, and don't think it much odds which of 'em I take. What I feel for Hetty's a different sort o' love, such as I believe nobody can know much about but them as feel it, and God as has given it to 'em. She's more nor everything else to me, all but my conscience and my good name. And if it's true what you've been saying all along — and if it's only been trifling and flirting as you call it, as'll be put an end to by your going away — why, then, I'd wait, and hope her heart 'ud turn to me after all. I'm loath to think you'd speak false to me, and I'll believe your word, however things may look."

"You would be wronging Hetty more than me not to believe it," said Arthur, almost violently, starting up from the ottoman, and moving away. But he threw himself into a chair again directly, saying, more feebly, "You seem to forget that, in suspecting me, you are casting imputations upon her."

"Nay, sir," Adam said, in a calmer voice, as if he were half relieved — for he was too straightforward to make a distinction between a direct falsehood and an indirect one — "Nay, sir, things don't lie level between Hetty and you. You're acting with your eyes open, whatever you may do; but how do you know what's been in her mind? She's all but a child — as any man with a conscience in him ought to feel bound to take care on. And whatever you may think, I know you've disturbed her mind. I know she's been fixing her heart on you; for there's a many things clear to me now as I didn't understand before. But you seem to make light o' what *she* may feel — you don't think o' that."

"Good God, Adam, let me alone!" Arthur burst out impetuously; "I feel it enough without your worrying me."

He was aware of his indiscretion as soon as the words had escaped him.

"Well, then, if you feel it," Adam rejoined, eagerly; "if you feel as you may ha' put false notions into her mind, and made her believe as you loved her, when all the while you meant nothing, I've this demand to make of you; — I'm not speaking for myself, but for her. I ask you t' undeceive her before you go away. Y'aren't going away forever; and if you leave her behind with a notion in her head o' your feeling about her the same as she feels about you, she'll be hankering after you, and the mischief may get worse. It may be a snarl to her now, but it'll save her pain i' th' end. I ask you to



write a letter — you may trust to my seeing as she gets it; tell her the truth, and take blame to yourself for behaving as you'd no right to do to a young woman as isn't your equal. I speak plain, sir; but I can't speak any other way. There's nobody can take care o' Hetty in this thing but me."

"I can do what I think needful in the matter," said Arthur, more and more irritated by mingled distress and perplexity, "without giving promises to you. I shall take what measures I think proper."

"No," said Adam, in an abrupt decided tone, "that won't do. I must know what ground I'm treading on. I must be safe as you've put an end to what ought never to ha' been begun. I don't forget what's owing to you as a gentleman; but in this thing we're man and man, and I can't give up."

There was no answer for some moments. Then Arthur said, "I'll see you to-morrow. I can bear no more now; I'm ill." He rose as he spoke, and reached his oap, as if intending to go.

"You won't see her again!" Adam exclaimed, with a flash of recurring anger and suspicion, moving towards the door and placing his back against it. "Either tell me she can never be my wife — tell me you've been lying — or else promise me what I've said."

Adam, uttering this alternative, stood like a terrible fate before Arthur, who had moved forward a step or two, and now stopped, faint, shaken, sick in mind and body. It seemed long to both of them — that inward struggle of Arthur's — before he said, feebly, "I promise; let me go."

Adam moved away from the door and opened it, but when Arthur reached the step, he stopped again and leaned against the door-post.

"You're not well enough to walk alone, sir," said Adam. "Take my arm again."

Arthur made no answer, and presently walked on, Adam following. But, after a few steps, he stood still again, and said, coldly, "I believe I must trouble you. It's getting late now, and there may be an alarm set up about me at home."

Adam gave his arm, and they walked on without uttering a word, till they came where the basket and the tools lay.

"I must pick up the tools, sir," Adam said. "They're my brother's. I doubt they'll be rusted. If you'll please to wait a minute."

Arthur stood still without speaking, and no other word passed between them till they were at the side entrance,

where he hoped to get in without being seen by any one. He said then, "Thank you; I needn't trouble you any further."

"What time will it be conven'ent for me to see you to-morrow, sir?" said Adam.

"You may send me word that you're here at five o'clock," said Arthur; "not before."

"Good-night, sir," said Adam. But he heard no reply; Arthur had turned into the house.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE NEXT MORNING.

ARTHUR did not pass a sleepless night; he slept long and well. For sleep comes to the perplexed—if the perplexed are only weary enough. But at seven he rang his bell and astonished Pym by declaring he was going to get up, and must have breakfast brought to him at eight.

"And see that my mare is saddled at half-past eight, and tell my grandfather when he's down that I'm better this morning, and am gone for a ride."

He had been awake an hour, and could rest in bed no longer. In bed our yesterdays are too oppressive: if a man can only get up, though it be but to whistle or to smoke, he has a present which offers some resistance to the past—sensations which assert themselves against tyrannous memories. And if there were such a thing as taking averages of feeling, it would certainly be found that in the hunting and shooting seasons regret, self-reproach, and mortified pride, weigh lighter on country gentlemen than in late spring and summer. Arthur felt that he should be more of a man on horseback. Even the presence of Pym, waiting on him with the usual deference, was a reassurance to him after the scenes of yesterday. For, with Arthur's sensitiveness to opinion, the loss of Adam's respect was a shock to his self-contentment which suffused his imagination with the sense that he had sunk in all eyes; as a sudden shock of fear from some real peril makes a nervous woman afraid even to step, because all her perceptions are suffused with a sense of danger.

Arthur's, as you know, was a loving nature. Deeds of

kindness were as easy to him as a bad habit: they were the common issue of his weaknesses and good qualities, of his egoism and his sympathy. He didn't like to witness pain, and he liked to have grateful eyes beaming on him as the giver of pleasure. When he was a lad of seven, he one day kicked down an old gardener's pitcher of broth, from no motive but a kicking impulse, not reflecting that it was the old man's dinner; but on learning that sad fact, he took his favorite pencil-case and a silver-hafted knife out of his pocket and offered them as compensation. He had been the same Arthur ever since, trying to make all offences forgotten in benefits. If there were any bitterness in his nature, it could only show itself against the man who refused to be conciliated by him. And perhaps the time was come for some of that bitterness to rise. At the first moment, Arthur had felt pure distress and self-reproach at discovering that Adam's happiness was involved in his relation to Hetty: if there had been a possibility of making Adam tenfold amends—if deeds of gift, or any other deeds, could have restored Adam's contentment and regard for him as a benefactor, Arthur would not only have executed them without hesitation, but would have felt bound all the more closely to Adam, and would never have been weary of making retribution. But Adam could receive no amends; his suffering could not be cancelled; his respect and affection could not be recovered by any prompt deeds of atonement. He stood like an immovable obstacle against which no pressure could avail; an embodiment of what Arthur most shrank from believing in—the irrevocableness of his own wrong-doing. The words of scorn, the refusal to shake hands, the mastery asserted over him in their last conversation in the Hermitage—above all, the sense of having been knocked down, to which a man does not very well reconcile himself, even under the most heroic circumstances—pressed on him with a galling pain which was stronger than compunction. Arthur would so gladly have persuaded himself that he had done no harm! And if no one had told him the contrary, he could have persuaded himself so much better. Nemesis can seldom forge a sword for herself out of our consciences—out of the suffering we feel in the suffering we may have caused: there is rarely metal enough there to make an effective weapon. Our moral sense learns the manners of good society, and smiles when others smile; but when some rude person gives rough names to our actions, she is apt to take part against us. And so it was with Arthur: Adam's

judgment of him, Adam's grating words, disturbed his self-soothing arguments.

Not that Arthur had been at ease before Adam's discovery. Struggles and resolves had transformed themselves into compunction and anxiety. He was distressed for Hetty's sake, and distressed for his own, that he must leave her behind. He had always, both in making and breaking resolutions, looked beyond his passion, and seen that it must speedily end in separation; but his nature was too ardent and tender for him not to suffer at the parting; and on Hetty's account he was filled with uneasiness. He had found out the dream in which she was living — that she was to be a lady in silks and satins; and when he had first talked to her about his going away, she had asked him tremblingly to let her go with him and be married. It was his painful knowledge of this which had given the most exasperating sting to Adam's reproaches. He had said no word with the purpose of deceiving her, her vision was all spun by her own childish fancy; but he was obliged to confess to himself that it was spun half out of his own actions. And to increase the mischief, on this last evening he had not dared to hint the truth to Hetty: he had been obliged to soothe her with tender, hopeful words, lest he should throw her into violent distress. He felt the situation acutely; felt the sorrow of the dear thing in the present, and thought with a darker anxiety of the tenacity which her feelings might have in the future. That was the one sharp point which pressed against him; every other he could evade by hopeful self-persuasion. The whole thing had been secret; the Poyzers had not the shadow of a suspicion. No one, except Adam, knew anything of what had passed — no one else was likely to know; for Arthur had impressed on Hetty that it would be fatal to betray, by word or look, that there had been the least intimacy between them; and Adam, who knew half their secret, would rather help them to keep it than betray it. It was an unfortunate business altogether, but there was no use in making it worse than it was, by imaginary exaggerations and forebodings of evil that might never come. The temporary sadness for Hetty was the worst consequence; he resolutely turned away his eyes from any bad consequence that was not demonstrably inevitable. But — but Hetty might have had the trouble in some other way if not in this. And perhaps hereafter he might be able to do a great deal for her, and make up to her for all the tears she would shed about him. She would owe the advantage of his care for her in

future years to the sorrow she had incurred now. *So good comes out of evil.* Such is the beautiful arrangement of things!

Are you inclined to ask whether this can be the same Arthur who, two months ago, had that freshness of feeling, that delicate honor which shrinks from wounding even a sentiment, and does not contemplate any more positive offence as possible for it? — who thought that his own self-respect was a higher tribunal than any external opinion? The same, I assure you, only under different conditions. Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds; and until we know what has been or will be the peculiar combination of outward with inward facts, which constitutes a man's critical actions, it will be better not to think ourselves wise about his character. There is a terrible coercion in our deeds which may first turn the honest man into a deceiver, and then reconcile him to the change; for this reason — that the second wrong presents itself to him in the guise of the only practicable right. The action which before commission has been seen with that blended common-sense and fresh untarnished feeling which is the healthy eye of the soul, is looked at afterwards with the lens of apologetic ingenuity, through which all things that men call beautiful and ugly are seen to be made up of textures very much alike. Europe adjusts itself to a *fait accompli*, and so does an individual character, — until the placid adjustment is disturbed by a convulsive retribution.

No man can escape this vitiating effect of an offence against his own sentiment of right, and the effect was the stronger in Arthur because of that very need of self-respect which, while his conscience was still at ease, was one of his best safeguards. Self-accusation was too painful to him — he could not face it. He must persuade himself that he had not been very much to blame; he began even to pity himself for the necessity he was under of deceiving Adam: it was a course so opposed to the honesty of his own nature. But then, it was the only right thing to do.

Well, whatever had been amiss in him, he was miserable enough in consequence: miserable about Hetty: miserable about this letter that he had promised to write, and that seemed at one moment to be a gross barbarity, at another perhaps the greatest kindness he could do to her. And across all this reflection would dart every now and then a sudden impulse of passionate defiance towards all consequences: he

would carry Hetty away, and all other considerations might go to . . .

In this state of mind the four walls of his room made an intolerable prison to him; they seemed to hem in and press down upon him all the crowd of contradictory thoughts and conflicting feelings, some of which would fly away in the open air. He had only an hour or two to make up his mind in, and he must get clear and calm. Once on Meg's back, in the fresh air of that fine morning, he should be more master of the situation.

The pretty creature arched her bay neck in the sunshine, and pawed the gravel, and trembled with pleasure when her master stroked her nose, and patted her, and talked to her even in a more caressing tone than usual. He loved her the better because she knew nothing of his secrets. But Meg was quite as well acquainted with her master's mental state as many others of her sex with the mental condition of the nice young gentlemen towards whom their hearts are in a state of fluttering expectation.

Arthur cantered for five miles beyond the Chase, till he was at the foot of a hill where there were no hedges or trees to hem in the road. Then he threw the bridle on Meg's neck, and prepared to make up his mind.

Hetty knew that their meeting yesterday must be the last before Arthur went away; there was no possibility of their contriving another without exciting suspicion; and she was like a frightened child, unable to think of anything, only able to cry at the mention of parting, and then put her face up to have the tears kissed away. He *could* do nothing but comfort her, and lull her into dreaming on. A letter would be a dreadfully abrupt way of awakening her! Yet there was truth in what Adam said — that it would save her from a lengthened delusion, which might be worse than a sharp immediate pain. And it was the only way of satisfying Adam, who *must* be satisfied, for more reasons than one. If he could have seen her again! But that was impossible; there was such a thorny hedge of hindrances between them, and an imprudence would be fatal. And yet, if he *could* see her again, what good would it do? Only cause him to suffer more from the sight of her distress and the remembrance of it. Away from him she was surrounded by all the motives to self-control.

A sudden dread here fell like a shadow across his imagination — the dread lest she should do something violent in her grief; and close upon that dread came another, which deep-

ened the shadow. But he shook them off with the force of youth and hope. What was the ground for painting the future in that dark way? It was just as likely to be the reverse. Arthur told himself, he did not deserve that things should turn out badly — he had never meant beforehand to do anything his conscience disapproved — he had been led on by circumstances. There was a sort of implicit confidence in him that he was really such a good fellow at bottom, Providence would not treat him harshly.

At all events, he couldn't help what would come now: all he could do was to take what seemed the best course at the present moment. And he persuaded himself that that course was to make the way open between Adam and Hetty. Her heart might really turn to Adam, as he said, after a while; and in that case there would have been no great harm done, since it was still Adam's ardent wish to make her his wife. To be sure, Adam was deceived — deceived in a way that Arthur would have resented as a deep wrong if it had been practised on himself. That was a reflection that marred the consoling prospect. Arthur's cheeks even burned in mingled shame and irritation at the thought. But what could a man do in such a dilemma? He was bound in honor to say no word that could injure Hetty: his first duty was to guard *her*. He would never have told or acted a lie on his own account. Good God! what a miserable fool he was to have brought himself into such a dilemma; and yet, if ever a man had excuses, he had. (Pity that consequences are determined not by excuses but by actions!)

Well, the letter must be written; it was the only means that promised a solution of the difficulty. The tears came into Arthur's eyes as he thought of Hetty reading it; but it would be almost as hard for him to write it: he was not doing anything easy to himself; and this last thought helped him to arrive at a conclusion. He could never deliberately have taken a step which inflicted pain on another and left himself at ease. Even a movement of jealousy at the thought of giving up Hetty to Adam, went to convince him that he was making a sacrifice.

When once he had come to this conclusion, he turned Meg round, and set off home again in a canter. The letter should be written the first thing, and the rest of the day would be filled up with other business: he should have no time to look behind him. Happily Irwine and Gawaine were coming to dinner, and by twelve o'clock the next day he should have left

the Chase miles behind him. There was some security in this constant occupation against an uncontrollable impulse seizing him to rush to Hetty and thrust into her hand some mad proposition that would undo everything. Faster and faster went the sensitive Meg, at every slight sign from her rider, till the canter had passed into a swift gallop.

"I thought they said th' young mester war took ill last night," said sour old John, the groom, at dinner-time in the servants' hall. "He's been ridin' fit to split the mare i' two this forenoon."

"That's happen one o' the symptims, John," said the facetious coachman.

"Then I wish he war let blood for 't, that's all," said John, grimly.

Adam had been early at the Chase to know how Arthur was, and had been relieved from all anxiety about the effects of his blow by learning that he was gone out for a ride. At five o'clock he was punctually there again, and sent up word of his arrival. In a few minutes Pym came down with a letter in his hand, and gave it to Adam, saying that the Captain was too busy to see him, and had written everything he had to say. The letter was directed to Adam, but he went out of doors again before opening it. It contained a sealed enclosure directed to Hetty. On the inside of the cover Adam read:—

"In the enclosed letter I have written everything you wish. I leave it to you to decide whether you will be doing best to deliver it to Hetty or to return it to ms. Ask yourself once more whether you are not taking a measure which may pain her more than mere silence.

"There is no need for our seeing each other again now. We shall meet with better feelings some months hence. A. D."

"Perhaps he's i' th' right on 't not to ses me," thought Adam. "It's no use meeting to say more hard words, and it's no use meeting to shake hands and say we're friends again. We're not friends, an' it's better not to pretend it. I know forgiveness is a man's duty, but, to my thinking, that can only mean as you're to give up all thoughts o' taking revenge: it can never mean as you're t' have your old feelings back again, for that's not possible. He's not the same man to me, and I can't *feel* the same towards him. God help me! I don't know whether I feel the same towards anybody: I seem as if I'd been measuring my work from a false line, and had got it all to measure over again."



But the question about delivering the letter to Hetty soon absorbed Adam's thoughts. Arthur had procured some relief to himself by throwing the decision on Adam with a warning; and Adam, who was not given to hesitation, hesitated here. He determined to feel his way — to ascertain as well as he could what was Hetty's state of mind before he decided on delivering the letter.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE DELIVERY OF THE LETTER.

THE next Sunday Adam joined the Poyzers on their way out of church, hoping for an invitation to go home with them. He had the letter in his pocket, and was anxious to have an opportunity of talking to Hetty alone. He could not see her face at church, for she had changed her seat, and when he came up to her to shake hands, her manner was doubtful and constrained. He expected this, for it was the first time she had met him since she had been aware that he had seen her with Arthur in the Grove.

"Come, you'll go on with us, Adam," Mr. Poyser said when they reached the turning; and as soon as they were in the fields Adam ventured to offer his arm to Hetty. The children soon gave them an opportunity of lingering behind a little, and then Adam said, —

"Will you contrive for me to walk out in the garden a bit with you this evening, if it keeps fine, Hetty? I've something partic'lar to talk to you about."

Hetty said, "Very well." She was really as anxious as Adam was that she should have some private talk with him: she wondered what he thought of her and Arthur: he must have seen them kissing, she knew, but she had no conception of the scene that had taken place between Arthur and Adam. Her first feeling had been that Adam would be very angry with her, and perhaps would tell her aunt and uncle; but it never entered her mind that he would dare to say anything to Captain Donnithorne. It was a relief to her that he behaved so kindly to her to-day, and wanted to speak to *her* alone; for she had trembled when she found he was going home with them lest he should mean "to tell." But, now he wanted to talk to her by herself, she should learn what he thought, and what he meant to do. She felt a certain confidence that she

could persuade him not to do anything she did not want him to do; she could perhaps even make him believe that she didn't care for Arthur; and as long as Adam thought there was any hope of her having him, he would do just what she liked, she knew. Besides, she *must* go on seeming to encourage Adam, lest her uncle and aunt should be angry, and suspect her of having some secret lover.

Hetty's little brain was busy with this combination, as she hung on Adam's arm, and said "yes" or "no" to some slight observations of his about the many hawthorn-berries there would be for the birds this next winter, and the low-hanging clouds that would hardly hold up till morning. And when they rejoined her aunt and uncle, she could pursue her thoughts without interruption, for Mr. Poyser held that though a young man might like to have the woman he was courting on his arm, he would nevertheless be glad of a little reasonable talk about business the while; and, for his own part, he was curious to hear the most recent news about the Chase Farm. So, through the rest of the walk, he claimed Adam's conversation for himself; and Hetty laid her small plots, and imagined her little scenes of cunning blandishment, as she walked along by the hedgerows on honest Adam's arm, quite as well as if she had been an elegantly-clad coquette alone in her boudoir. For if a country beauty in clumsy shoes be only shallow-hearted enough, it is astonishing how closely her mental processes may resemble those of a lady in society and crinoline, who applies her refined intellect to the problem of committing indiscretions without compromising herself. Perhaps the resemblance was not much the less because Hetty felt very unhappy all the while. The parting with Arthur was a double pain to her; mingling with the tumult of passion and vanity, there was a dim undefined fear that the future might shape itself in some way quite unlike her dream. She clung to the comforting hopeful words Arthur had uttered in their last meeting — "I shall come again at Christmas, and then we will see what can be done." She clung to the belief that he was so fond of her, he would never be happy without her; and she still hugged her secret — that a great gentleman loved her — with gratified pride, as a superiority over all the girls she knew. But the uncertainty of the future, the possibilities to which she could give no shape, began to press upon her like the invisible weight of air; she was alone on her little island of dreams, and all around her was the dark unknown water where Arthur was gone. She

could gather no elation of spirits now by looking forward, but only by looking backward to build confidence on past words and caresses. But occasionally, since Thursday evening, her dim anxieties had been almost lost behind the more definite fear that Adam might betray what he knew to her uncle and aunt, and his sudden proposition to talk with her alone had set her thoughts to work in a new way. She was eager not to lose this evening's opportunity; and after tea, when the boys were going into the garden, and Totty begged to go with them, Hetty said, with an alacrity that surprised Mrs. Poyser —

"I'll go with her, aunt."

It did not seem at all surprising that Adam said he would go too; and soon he and Hetty were left alone together on the walk by the filbert-trees, while the boys were busy elsewhere gathering the large unripe nuts to play at "cob-nut" with, and Totty was watching them with a puppy-like air of contemplation. It was but a short time — hardly two months — since Adam had had his mind filled with delicious hopes, as he stood by Hetty's side in this garden. The remembrance of that scene had often been with him since Thursday evening: the sunlight through the apple-tree boughs, the red bunches, Hetty's sweet blush. It came importunately now, on this sad evening, with the low-hanging clouds; but he tried to suppress it, lest some emotion should impel him to say more than was needful for Hetty's sake.

"After what I saw on Thursday night, Hetty," he began, "you won't think me making too free in what I'm going to say. If you was being courted by any man as 'ud make you his wife, and I'd known you was fond of him, and meant to have him, I should have no right to speak a word to you about it; but when I see you're being made love to by a gentleman as can never marry you, and doesna think o' marrying you, I feel bound t' interfere for you. I can't speak about it to them as are i' the place o' your parents, for that might bring worse trouble than's needful."

Adam's words relieved one of Hetty's fears, but they also carried a meaning which sickened her with a strengthened foreboding. She was pale and trembling, and yet she would have angrily contradicted Adam, if she had dared to betray her feelings. But she was silent.

"You're so young, you know, Hetty," he went on, almost tenderly, "and y' haven't seen much o' what goes on in the world. It's right for me to do what I can to save you from

getting into trouble for want o' your knowing where you're being led to. If anybody besides me knew what I know about your meeting a gentleman, and having fine presents from him, they'd speak light on you, and you'd lose your character. And besides that, you'll have to suffer in your feelings, wi' giving your love to a man as can never marry you, so as he might take care of you all your life."

Adam paused, and looked at Hetty, who was plucking the leaves from the filbert-trees, and tearing them up in her hand. Her little plans and preconcerted speeches had all forsaken her, like an ill-learn't lesson, under the terrible agitation produced by Adam's words. There was a cruel force in their calm certainty which threatened to grapple and crush her flimsy hopes and fancies. She wanted to resist them — she wanted to throw them off with angry contradiction; but the determination to conceal what she felt still governed her. It was nothing more than a blind prompting now, for she was unable to calculate the effect of her words.

"You've no right to say as I love him," she said, faintly, but impetuously, plucking another rough leaf and tearing it up. She was very beautiful in her paleness and agitation, with her dark childish eyes dilated, and her breath shorter than usual. Adam's heart yearned over her as he looked at her. Ah, if he could but comfort her, and soothe her, and save her from this pain; if he had but some sort of strength that would enable him to rescue her poor troubled mind, as he would have rescued her body in the face of all danger!

"I doubt it must be so, Hetty," he said, tenderly; "for I canna believe you'd let any man kiss you by yourselves, and give you a gold box with his hair, and go a-walking i' the Grove to meet him, if you didna love him. I'm not blaming you, for I know it 'ud begin by little and little, till at last you'd not be able to throw it off. It's him I blame for stealing your love i' that way, when he knew he could never make you the right amends. He's been trifling with you, and making a plaything of you, and caring nothing about you as a man ought to care."

"Yes, he does care for me; I know better nor you," Hetty burst out. Everything was forgotten but the pain and anger she felt at Adam's words.

"Nay, Hetty," said Adam, "if he'd cared for you rightly he'd never ha' behaved so. He told me himself he meant nothing by his kissing and presents, and he wanted to make me believe as you thought light of 'em too. But I know

better nor that. I can't help thinking as you've been trusting to his loving you well enough to marry you, for all he's a gentleman. And that's why I must speak to you about it, Hetty, — for fear you should be deceiving yourself. It's never entered his head the thought o' marrying you."

"How do you know? How durst you say so?" said Hetty, pausing in her walk and trembling. The terrible decision of Adam's tone shook her with fear. She had no presence of mind left for the reflection that Arthur would have his reasons for not telling the truth to Adam. Her words and look were enough to determine Adam: he must give her the letter.

"Perhaps you can't believe me, Hetty; because you think too well of him — because you think he loves you better than he does. But I've got a letter i' my pocket, as he wrote himself for me to give you. I've not read the letter, but he says he's told you the truth in it. But before I give you the letter, consider, Hetty, and don't let it take too much hold on you. It wouldna ha' been good for you if he'd wanted to do such a mad thing as marry you: it 'ud ha' led to no happiness i' th' end."

Hetty said nothing: she felt a revival of hope at the mention of a letter which Adam had not read. There would be something quite different in it from what he thought.

Adam took out the letter, but he held it in his hand still, while he said, in a tone of tender entreaty, —

"Don't you bear me ill-will, Hetty, because I'm the means o' bringing you this pain. God knows I'd ha' borne a good deal worse for the sake o' sparing it you. And think — there's nobody but me knows about this; and I'll take care of you as if I was your brother. You're the same as ever to me, for I don't believe you've done any wrong knowingly."

Hetty had laid her hand on the letter, but Adam did not loose it till he had done speaking. She took no notice of what he said — she had not listened; but when he loosed the letter, she put it into her pocket, without opening it, and then began to walk more quickly, as if she wanted to go in.

"You're in the right not to read it just yet," said Adam. "Read it when you're by yourself. But stay out a little bit longer, and let us call the children: you look so white and ill; your aunt may take notice of it."

Hetty heard the warning. It recalled to her the necessity of rallying her native powers of concealment, which had half given way under the shock of Adam's words. And she had

the letter in her pocket: she was sure there was comfort in that letter in spite of Adam. She ran to find Totty, and soon reappeared with recovered color, leading Totty, who was making a sour face, because she had been obliged to throw away an unripe apple that she had set her small teeth in.

"Heh, Totty," said Adam, "come and ride on my shoulder — ever so high — you'll touch the tops o' the trees."

What little child ever refused to be comforted by that glorious sense of being seized strongly and swung upward? I don't believe Ganyমেদে cried when the eagle carried him away, and perhaps deposited him on Jove's shoulder at the end. Totty smiled down complacently from her secure height, and pleasant was the sight to the mother's eyes, as she stood at the house door and saw Adam coming with his small burthen.

"Bless your sweet face, my pet," she said, the mother's strong love filling her keen eyes with mildness, as Totty leaned forward and put out her arms. She had no eyes for Hetty at that moment, and only said, without looking at her, "You go and draw some ale, Hetty: the gells are both at the cheese."

After the ale had been drawn and her uncle's pipe lighted, there was Totty to be taken to bed, and brought down again in her night-gown, because she would cry instead of going to sleep. Then there was supper to be got ready, and Hetty must be continually in the way to give help. Adam stayed till he knew Mrs. Poyser expected him to go, engaging her and her husband in talk as constantly as he could, for the sake of leaving Hetty more at ease. He lingered, because he wanted to see her safely through that evening, and he was delighted to find how much self-command she showed. He knew she had not had time to read the letter, but he did not know she was buoyed up by a secret hope that the letter would contradict everything he had said. It was hard work for him to leave her — hard to think that he should not know for days how she was bearing her trouble. But he must go at last, and all he could do was to press her hand gently as he said "Good-by," and hope she would take that as a sign that if his love could ever be a refuge for her, it was there the same as ever. How busy his thoughts were, as he walked home, in devising pitying excuses for her folly; in referring all her weakness to the sweet lovingness of her nature; in blaming Arthur, with less and less inclination to admit that *his* conduct might be extenuated too! His exasperation at Hetty's

suffering — and also at the sense that she was possibly thrust forever out of his own reach — deafened him to any plea for the mis-called friend who had wrought this misery. Adam was a clear-sighted, fair-minded man — a fine fellow, indeed, morally as well as physically. But if Aristides the Just was ever in love and jealous, he was at that moment not perfectly magnanimous. And I cannot pretend that Adam, in these painful days, felt nothing but righteous indignation and loving pity. He was bitterly jealous; and in proportion as his love made him indulgent in his judgment of Hetty, the bitterness found a vent in his feelings towards Arthur.

"Her head was allays likely to be turned," he thought, "when a gentleman, with his fine manners, and fine clothes, and his white hands, and that way o' talking gentlefolks have, came about her, making up to her in a bold way, as a man couldn't do that was only her equal; and it's much if she'll ever like a common man now." He could not help drawing his own hands out of his pocket, and looking at them — at the hard palms and the broken finger-nails. "I'm a roughish fellow, altogether: I don't know, now I come to think on't, what there is much for a woman to like about me; and yet I might ha' got another wife easy enough, if I hadn't set my heart on her. But it's little matter what other women think about me, if she can't love me. She might ha' loved me, perhaps, as likely as any other man — there's nobody hereabouts as I'm afraid of, if *he* hadn't come between us; but now I shall belike be hateful to her because I'm so different to him. And yet there's no telling — she may turn round the other way, when she finds he's made light of her all the while. She may come to feel the vally of a man as 'ud be thankful to be bound to her all his life. But I must put up with it whichever way it is — I've only to be thankful it's been no worse: I am not th' only man that's got to do without much happiness i' this life. There's many a good bit o' work done with a sad heart. It's God's will, and that's enough for us: we shouldn't know better how things ought to be than He does, I reckon, if we was to spend our lives i' puzzling. But it 'ud ha' gone near to spoil my work for me, if I'd seen her brought to sorrow and shame, and through the man as I've always been proud to think on. Since I've been spared that, I've no right to grumble. When a man's got his limbs whole, he can bear a smart out or two."

As Adam was getting over a stile at this point in his reflections, he perceived a man walking along the field before him.

He knew it was Seth, returning from an evening preaching, and made haste to overtake him.

"I thought thee'dst be at home before me," he said, as Seth turned round to wait for him, "for I'm later than usual to-night."

"Well, I'm later too, for I got into talk, after meeting, with John Barnes, who has lately professed himself in a state of perfection, and I'd a question to ask him about his experience. It's one o' them subjects that lead you further than y' expect — they don't lie along the straight road."

They walked along together in silence two or three minutes. Adam was not inclined to enter into the subtleties of religious experience, but he *was* inclined to interchange a word or two of brotherly affection and confidence with Seth. That was a rare impulse in him, much as the brothers loved each other. They hardly ever spoke of personal matters, or uttered more than an allusion to their family troubles. Adam was by nature reserved in all matters of feeling, and Seth felt a certain timidity towards his more practical brother.

"Seth, lad," Adam said, putting his arm on his brother's shoulder, "hast heard anything from Dinah Morris since she went away?"

"Yes," said Seth. "She told me I might write her word after a while, how we went on, and how mother bore up under her trouble. So I wrote to her a fortnight ago, and told her about thee having a new employment, and how mother was more contented; and last Wednesday, when I called at the post at Treddles' on I found a letter from her. I think thee'dst perhaps like to read it; but I didna say anything about it, because thee'st seemed so full of other things. It's quite easy t' read — she writes wonderful for a woman."

Seth had drawn the letter from his pocket and held it out to Adam, who said, as he took it, —

"Ay, lad, I've got a tough load to carry just now — thee mustna take it ill if I'm a bit silenter and crustier nor usual. Trouble doesna make me care the less for thee. I know we shall stick together to the last."

"I take nought ill o' thee, Adam: I know well enough what it means if thee't a bit short wi' me now and then."

"There's mother opening the door to look out for us," said Adam, as they mounted the slope. "She's been sitting i' the dark as usual. Well, Gyp, well! art glad to see me?"

Lisbeth went in again quickly and lighted a candle, for she had heard the welcome rustling of footsteps on the grass, before Gyp's joyful bark.



"Eh, my lads! th' hours war ne'er so long sin' I war born as they'n been this blessed Sunday night. What can ye both ha' been doin' till this time?"

"Thee shouldstna sit i' the dark, mother," said Adam; "that makes the time seem longer."

"Eh, what am I to do wi' burnin' candle of a Sunday, when there's on'y me, an' it's sin to do a bit o' knittin'? The daylight's long enough for me to stare i' the booke as I canna read. It 'ud be a fine way o' shortenin' the time, to make it waste the good candle. But which on you's for ha'in' supper? Ye mun ayther be clemmed or full, I should think, seein' what time o' night it is."

"I'm hungry, mother," said Seth, seating himself at the little table, which had been spread ever since it was light.

"I've had my supper," said Adam. "Here, Gyp," he added, taking some cold potato from the table, and rubbing the rough gray head that looked up towards him.

"Thee needstna be gi'in' th' dog," said Lisbeth: "I'n fed him well a'ready. I'm not like to forget him, I reckon, when he's all o' thee I can get sight on."

"Come, then, Gyp," said Adam, "we'll go to bed. Good-night, mother; I'm very tired."

"What ails him, dost know?" Lisbeth said to Seth, when Adam was gone up-stairs. "He's like as if he was struck for death this day or two — he's so cast down. I found him i' the shop this forenoon, arter thee wast gone, a-sittin' an' doin' nothin' — not so much as a booke afore him."

"He's a deal o' work upon him just now, mother," said Seth, "and I think he's a bit troubled in his mind. Don't you take notice of it, because it hurts him when you do. Be as kind to him as you can, mother, and don't say anything to vex him."

"Eh, what dost talk o' my vexin' him? an' what am I like to be but kind? I'll ma' him a kettle-cake for breakfast i' the mornin'."

Adam, meanwhile, was reading Dinah's letter by the light of his dip candle.

"DEAR BROTHER SETH, — Your letter lay three days beyond my knowing of it at the Post, for I had not money enough by me to pay the carriage, this being a time of great need and sickness here, with the rains that have fallen, as if the windows of heaven were opened again; and to lay by money, from day to day, in such a time, when there are so many in

present need of all things, would be a want of trust like the laying up of the mauna. I speak of this, because I would not have you think me slow to answer, or that I had small joy in your rejoicing at the worldly good that has befallen your brother Adam. The honor and love you bear him is nothing but meet, for God has given him great gifts, and he uses them as the patriarch Joseph did, who, when he was exalted to a place of power and trust, yet yearned with tenderness towards his parent and his younger brother.

"My heart is knit to your aged mother since it was granted me to be near her in the day of trouble. Speak to her of me, and tell her I often bear her in my thoughts at evening time, when I am sitting in the dim light as I did with her, and we held one another's hands, and I spoke the words of comfort that were given to me. Ah, that is a blessed time, isn't it, Seth, when the outward light is fading, and the body is a little wearied with its work and its labor. Then the inward light shines the brighter, and we have a deeper sense of resting on the Divine strength. I sit on my chair in the dark room and close my eyes, and it is as if I was out of the body and could feel no want forevermore. For then, the very hardship, and the sorrow, and the blindness, and the sin, I have beheld and been ready to weep over, — yea, all the anguish of the children of men, which sometimes wraps me round like sudden darkness — I can bear with a willing pain, as if I was sharing the Redeemer's cross. For I feel it, I feel it — infinite love is suffering too — yea, in the fulness of knowledge it suffers, it yearns, it mourns; and that is a blind self-seeking which wants to be freed from the sorrow wherewith the whole creation groaneth and travaileth. Surely it is not true blessedness to be free from sorrow, while there is sorrow and sin in the world: sorrow is then a part of love, and love does not seek to throw it off. It is not the spirit only that tells me this — I see it in the whole work and word of the gospel. Is there not pleading in heaven? Is not the Man of Sorrows there in that crucified body wherewith he ascended? And is He not one with the Infinite Love itself — as our love is one with our sorrow?

"These thoughts have been much borne in on me of late, and I have seen with new clearness the meaning of those words, 'If any man love me, let him take up my cross.' I have heard this enlarged on as if it meant the troubles and persecutions we bring on ourselves by confessing Jesus. But surely that is a narrow thought. The true cross of the Re-

deemer was the sin and sorrow of this world — *that was what* lay heavy on his heart — and that is the cross we shall share with him, that is the cup we must drink of with him, if we would have any part in that Divine Love which is one with his sorrow.

“In my outward lot, which you ask about, I have all things and abound. I have had constant work in the mill, though some of the other hands have been turned off for a time; and my body is greatly strengthened, so that I feel little weariness after long walking and speaking. What you say about staying in your own country with your mother and brother shows me that you have a true guidance: your lot is appointed there by a clear showing, and to seek a greater blessing elsewhere would be like laying a false offering on the altar and expecting the fire from heaven to kindle it. My work and my joy are here among the hills, and I sometimes think I cling too much to my life among the people here, and should be rebellious if I was called away.

“I was thankful for your tidings about the dear friends at the Hall Farm; for though I sent them a letter, by my aunt’s desire, after I came back from my sojourn among them, I have had no word from them. My aunt has not the pen of a ready writer, and the work of the house is sufficient for the day, for she is weak in body. My heart cleaves to her and her children as the nearest of all to me in the flesh; yea, and to all in that house. I am carried away to them continually in my sleep, and often in the midst of work, and even of speech, the thought of them is borne in on me as if they were in need and trouble, which yet is dark to me. There may be some leading here; but I wait to be taught. You say they are all well.

“We shall see each other again in the body, I trust, — though, it may be, not for a long while; for the brethren and sisters at Leeds are desirous to have me for a short space among them, when I have a door opened me again to leave Snowfield.

“Farewell, dear brother — and yet not farewell. For those children of God whom it has been granted to see each other face to face and to hold communion together and to feel the same spirit working in both, can never more be sundered, though the hills may lie between. For their souls are enlarged forevermore by that union, and they bear one another about in their thoughts continually as it were a new strength. — Your faithful Sister and fellow-worker in Christ,

DINAH MORRIS.”

"I have not skill to write the words so small as you do, and my pen moves slow. And so I am straitened, and say but little of what is in my mind. Greet your mother for me with a kiss. She asked me to kiss her twice when we parted."

Adam had refolded the letter, and was sitting meditatively with his head resting on his arm at the head of the bed, when Seth came up-stairs.

"Hast read the letter?" said Seth.

"Yes," said Adam. "I don't know what I should ha' thought of her and her letter if I'd never seen her: I dare say I should ha' thought a preaching woman hateful. But she's one as makes everything seem right she says and does, and I seemed to see her and hear her speaking when I read the letter. It's wonderful how I remember her looks and her voice. She'd make thee rare and happy, Seth; she's just the woman for thee."

"It's no use thinking o' that," said Seth, despondingly. "She spoke so firm, and she's not the woman to say one thing and mean another."

"Nay, but her feelings may grow different. A woman may get to love by degrees—the best fire doesna flare up the soonest. I'd have thee go and see her by-and-by: I'd make it convenient for thee to be away three or four days, and it 'ud be no walk for thee—only between twenty and thirty mile."

"I should like to see her again, whether or no, if she wouldna be displeased with me for going," said Seth.

"She'll be none displeased," said Adam, emphatically, getting up and throwing off his coat. "It might be a great happiness to us all, if she'd have thee, for mother took to her so wonderful, and seemed so contented to be with her."

"Ay," said Seth, rather timidly, "and Dinah's fond o' Hetty too; she thinks a deal about her."

Adam made no reply to that, and no other word but "good-night" passed between them.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## IN HETTY'S BED-CHAMBER.

It was no longer light enough to go to bed without a candle, even in Mrs. Poyser's early household, and Hetty carried one with her as she went up at last to her bedroom soon after Adam was gone, and bolted the door behind her.

Now she would read her letter. It must—it must have comfort in it. How was Adam to know the truth? It was always likely he should say what he did say.

She set down the candle, and took out the letter. It had a faint scent of roses, which made her feel as if Arthur were close to her. She put it to her lips, and a rush of remembered sensations for a moment or two swept away all fear. But her heart began to flutter strangely, and her hands to tremble as she broke the seal. She read slowly; it was not easy for her to read a gentleman's handwriting, though Arthur had taken pains to write plainly.

“DEAREST HETTY,—I have spoken truly when I have said that I loved you, and I shall never forget our love. I shall be your true friend as long as life lasts, and I hope to prove this to you in many ways. If I say anything to pain you in this letter, do not believe it is for want of love and tenderness towards you, for there is nothing I would not do for you, if I knew it to be really for your happiness. I cannot bear to think of my little Hetty shedding tears when I am not there to kiss them away; and if I followed only my own inclinations, I should be with her at this moment instead of writing. It is very hard for me to part from her—harder still for me to write words which may seem unkind, though they spring from the truest kindness.

“Dear, dear Hetty, sweet as our love has been to me, sweet as it would be to me for you to love me always, I feel that it would have been better for us both if we had never had that happiness, and that it is my duty to ask you to love me and care for me as little as you can. The fault has all been mine, for though I have been unable to resist the longing to be near

you, I have felt all the while that your affection for me might cause you grief. I ought to have resisted my feelings. I should have done so, if I had been a better fellow than I am; but now, since the past cannot be altered, I am bound to save you from any evil that I have power to prevent. And I feel it would be a great evil for you if your affections continued so fixed on me that you could think of no other man who might be able to make you happier by his love than I ever can, and if you continued to look towards something in the future which cannot possibly happen. For, dear Hetty, if I were to do what you one day spoke of, and make you my wife, I should do what you yourself would come to feel was for your misery instead of your welfare. I know you can never be happy except by marrying a man in your own station; and if I were to marry you now, I should only be adding to any wrong I have done, besides offending against my duty in the other relations of life. You know nothing, dear Hetty, of the world in which I must always live, and you would soon begin to dislike me, because there would be so little in which we should be alike.

"And since I cannot marry you, we must part—we must try not to feel like lovers any more. I am miserable while I say this, but nothing else can be. Be angry with me, my sweet one, I deserve it; but do not believe that I shall not always care for you—always be grateful to you—always remember my Hetty; and if any trouble should come that we do not now foresee, trust in me to do everything that lies in my power.

"I have told you where you are to direct a letter to, if you want to write, but I put it down below lest you should have forgotten. Do not write unless there is something I can really do for you; for, dear Hetty, we must try to think of each other as little as we can. Forgive me, and try to forget everything about me, except that I shall be, as long as I live, your affectionate friend,

"ARTHUR DONNITHORNE."

Slowly Hetty had read this letter; and when she looked up from it there was the reflection of a blanched face in the old dim glass—a white marble face with rounded childish forms, but with something sadder than a child's pain in it. Hetty did not see the face—she saw nothing—she only felt that she was cold and sick and trembling. The letter shook and rustled in her hand. She laid it down. It was a horrible sen-

sation — this cold and trembling : it swept away the very ideas that produced it, and Hetty got up to reach a warm cloak from her clothes-press, wrapped it round her, and sat as if she were thinking of nothing but getting warm. Presently she took up the letter with a firmer hand, and began to read it through again. The tears came this time — great rushing tears, that blinded her and blotched the paper. She felt nothing but that Arthur was cruel — cruel to write so, cruel not to marry her. Reasons why he could not marry her had no existence for her mind ; how could she believe in any misery that could come to her from the fulfilment of all she had been longing for and dreaming of ? She had not the ideas that could make up the notion of that misery.

As she threw down the letter again, she caught sight of her face in the glass ; it was reddened now, and wet with tears ; it was almost like a companion that she might complain to — that would pity her. She leaned forward on her elbows, and looked into those dark overflowing eyes, and at that quivering mouth, and saw how the tears came thicker and thicker, and how the mouth became convulsed with sobs.

The shattering of all her little dream-world, the crushing blow on her new-born passion, afflicted her pleasure-craving nature with an overpowering pain that annihilated all impulse to resistance, and suspended her anger. She sat sobbing till the candle went out, and then, wearied, aching, stupefied with crying, threw herself on the bed without undressing, and went to sleep.

There was a feeble dawn in the room when Hetty awoke, a little after four o'clock, with a sense of dull misery, the cause of which broke upon her gradually, as she began to discern the objects round her in the dim light. And then came the frightening thought that she had to conceal her misery, as well as to bear it, in this dreary daylight that was coming. She could lie no longer : she got up and went towards the table : there lay the letter ; she opened her treasure-drawer : there lay the ear-rings and the locket — the signs of all her short happiness — the signs of the life-long dreariness that was to follow it. Looking at the little trinkets which she had once eyed and fingered so fondly as the earnest of her future paradise of finery, she lived back in the moments when they had been given to her with such tender caresses, such strangely pretty words, such glowing looks, which filled her with a bewildering delicious surprise — they were so much sweeter than she had thought anything could be. And the Arthur who had

spoken to her and looked at her in this way, who was present with her now — whose arm she felt round her, his cheek against hers, his very breath upon her — was the cruel, cruel Arthur who had written that letter: — that letter which she snatched and crushed and then opened again, that she might read it once more. The half-benumbed mental condition which was the effect of the last night's violent crying, made it necessary to her to look again and see if her wretched thoughts were actually true — if the letter was really so cruel. She had to hold it close to the window, else she could not have read it by the faint light. Yes! it was worse — it was more cruel. She crushed it up again in anger. She hated the writer of that letter — hated him for the very reason that she hung upon him with all her love — all the girlish passion and vanity that made up her love.

She had no tears this morning. She had wept them all away last night, and now she felt that dry-eyed morning misery, which is worse than the first shock, because it has the future in it as well as the present. Every morning to come, as far as her imagination could stretch, she would have to get up and feel that the day would have no joy for her. For there is no despair so absolute as that which comes with the first moments of our first great sorrow, when we have not yet known what it is to have suffered and be healed, to have despaired and to have recovered hope. As Hetty began languidly to take off the clothes she had worn all the night, that she might wash herself and brush her hair, she had a sickening sense that her life would go on in this way: she should always be doing things she had no pleasure in, getting up to the old tasks of work, seeing people she cared nothing about, going to church, and to Treddleston, and to tea with Mrs. Best, and carrying no happy thought with her. For her short poisonous delights had spoiled forever all the little joys that had once made the sweetness of her life — the new frock ready for Treddleston fair, the party at Mr. Britton's at Broxton wake, the beaux that she would say "No" to for a long while, and the prospect of the wedding that was to come at last when she would have a silk gown and a great many clothes all at once. These things were all flat and dreary to her now: everything would be weariness: and she would carry about for ever a hopeless thirst and longing.

She paused in the midst of her languid undressing, and leaned against the dark old clothes-press. Her neck and arms were bare, her hair hung down in delicate rings; and they



were just as beautiful as they were that night two months ago, when she walked up and down this bed-chamber glowing with vanity and hope. She was not thinking of her neck and arms now; even her own beauty was indifferent to her. Her eyes wandered sadly over the dull old chamber, and then looked out vacantly towards the growing dawn. Did a remembrance of Dinah come across her mind? — of her foreboding words, which had made her angry? — of Dinah's affectionate entreaty to think of her as a friend in trouble? No, the impression had been too slight to recur. Any affection or comfort Dinah could have given her would have been as indifferent to Hetty this morning as everything else was except her bruised passion. She was only thinking she could never stay here and go on with the old life — she could better bear something quite new than sinking back into the old everyday round. She would like to run away that very morning, and never see any of the old faces again. But Hetty's was not a nature to face difficulties — to dare to loose her hold on the familiar, and rush blindly on some unknown condition. Hers was a luxurious and vain nature, not a passionate one; and if she were ever to take any violent measure, she must be urged to it by the desperation of terror. There was not much room for her thoughts to travel in the narrow circle of her imagination, and she soon fixed on the one thing she would do to get away from her old life: she would ask her uncle to let her go to be a lady's-maid. Miss Lydia's maid would help her to get a situation, if she knew Hetty had her uncle's leave.

When she had thought of this, she fastened up her hair and began to wash: it seemed more possible to her to go downstairs and try to behave as usual. She would ask her uncle this very day. On Hetty's blooming health it would take a great deal of such mental suffering as hers to leave any deep impress; and when she was dressed as neatly as usual in her working-dress, with her hair tucked up under her little cap, an indifferent observer would have been more struck with the young roundness of her cheek and neck, and the darkness of her eyes and eyelashes, than with any signs of sadness about her. But when she took up the crumpled letter and put it in her drawer, that she might lock it out of sight, hard smarting tears, having no relief in them as the great drops had that fall last night, forced their way into her eyes. She wiped them away quickly: she must not cry in the day-time: nobody should find out how miserable she was, nobody should know she was disappointed about anything; and the thought that

the eyes of her aunt and uncle would be upon her, gave her the self-command which often accompanies a great dread. For Hetty looked out from her secret misery towards the possibility of their ever knowing what had happened, as the sick and weary prisoner might think of the possible pillory. They would think her conduct shameful; and shame was torture. That was poor little Hetty's conscience.

So she locked up her drawer and went away to her early work.

In the evening, when Mr. Poyser was smoking his pipe, and his good-nature was therefore at its superlative moment, Hetty seized the opportunity of her aunt's absence to say, —

"Uncle, I wish you'd let me go for a lady's-maid."

Mr. Poyser took the pipe from his mouth, and looked at Hetty in mild surprise for some moments. She was sewing, and went on with her work industriously.

"Why, what's put that into your head, my wench?" he said at last, after he had given one conservative puff.

"I should like it — I should like it better than farm-work."

"Nay, nay; you fancy so because you donna know it, my wench. It wouldn't be half so good for your health, nor for your luck i' life. I'd like you to stay wi' us till you've got a good husband: you're my own niece, and I wouldn't have you go to service, though it was a gentleman's house, as long as I've got a home for you."

"Mr. Poyser paused, and puffed away at his pipe.

"I like the needlework," said Hetty, "and I should get good wages."

"Has your aunt been a bit sharp wi' you?" said Mr. Poyser, not noticing Hetty's further argument. "You mustna mind that, my wench — she does it for your good. She wishes you well; an' there isn't many aunts as are no kin to you 'ud ha' done by you as she has."

"No, it isn't my aunt," said Hetty, "but I should like the work better."

"It was all very well for you to learn the work a bit — an' I gev my consent to that fast enough, sin' Mrs. Pomfret was willing to teach you. For if anything was t' happen, it's well to know how to turn your hand to different sorts o' things. But I niver meant you to go to service, my wench; my family's ate their own bread and cheese as fur back as anybody knows, hanna they, father? You wouldna like your grandchild to take wage?"

"Na-a-y," said old Martin, with an elongation of the word,

meant to make it bitter as well as negative, while he leaned forward and looked down on the floor. "But the wench takes arter her mother. I'd hard work t' hould *her* in, an' she married i' spite o' me—a feller wi' on'y two head o' stock when there should ha' been ten on's farm—she might well die o' th' inflammation afore she war thirty."

It was seldom the old man made so long a speech; but his son's question had fallen like a bit of dry fuel on the embers of a long unextinguished resentment, which had always made the grandfather more indifferent to Hetty than to his son's children. Her mother's fortune had been spent by that good-for-nought Sorrel, and Hetty had Sorrel's blood in her veins.

"Poor thing, poor thing!" said Martin the younger, who was sorry to have provoked this retrospective harshness. "She'd but bad luck. But Hetty's got as good a chance o' getting a solid, sober husband as any gell i' this country."

After throwing out this pregnant hint, Mr. Poyser recurred to his pipe and his silence, looking at Hetty to see if she did not give some sign of having renounced her ill-advised wish. But instead of that, Hetty, in spite of herself, began to cry, half out of ill-temper at the denial, half out of the day's repressed sadness.

"Heh, heh!" said Mr. Poyser, meaning to check her playfully, "don't let's have any crying. Crying's for them as ha' got no home, not for them as want to get rid o' one. What dost think?" he continued to his wife, who now came back into the house-place, knitting with fierce rapidity, as if that movement were a necessary function, like the twittering of a crab's antennæ.

"Think?—why, I think we shall have the fowl stole before we are much older, wi' that gell forgetting to lock the pens up o' nights. What's the matter now, Hetty? What are you crying at?"

"Why, she's been wanting to go for a lady's-maid," said Mr. Poyser. "I tell her we can do better for her nor that."

"I thought she'd got some maggot in her head, she's gone about wi' her mouth buttoned up so all day. It's all wi' going so among them servants at the Chase, as we war fools for letting her. She thinks it 'ud be a finer life than being wi' them as are akin to her, and ha' brought her up sin' she war no bigger nor Marty. She thinks there's nothing belongs to being a lady's-maid but wearing finer clothes nor she was born to, I'll be bound. It's what rag she can get to stick on her as she's thinking on from morning till night; as I oftan

ask her if she wouldn't like to be the mawkin i' the field, for then she'd be made o' rags inside and out. I'll never gi' my consent to her going for a lady's-maid, while she's got good friends to take care on her till she's married to somebody better nor one o' them valets, as is neither a common man nor a gentleman, an' must live on the fat o' the land, an's like enough to stick his hands under his coat tails and expect his wife to work for him."

"Ay, ay," said Mr. Poyser, "we must have a better husband for her nor that, and there's better at hand. Come, my wench, give over crying, and get to bed. I'll do better for you nor letting you go for a lady's-maid. Let's hear no more on't."

When Hetty was gone up-stairs he said, —

"I canna make it out as she should want to go away, for I thought she'd got a mind t' Adam Bede. She's looked like it o' late."

"Eh, there's no knowing what she's got a liking to, for things take no more hold on her than if she was a dried pea. I believe that gell, Molly — as is aggravatin' enough, for the matter o' that — but I believe she'd care more about leaving us and the children, for all she's been here but a year to come Michaelmas, nor Hetty would. But she's got this notion o' being a lady's-maid wi' going among them servants — we might ha' known what it 'ud lead to when we let her go to learn the fine work. But I'll put a stop to it pretty quick."

"Thee'dst be sorry to part wi' her, if it wasn't for her good," said Mr. Poyser. "She's useful to thee i' the work."

"Sorry? yes; I'm fonder on her nor she deserves — a little hard-hearted hussey, wanting to leave us i' that way. I can't ha' had her about me these seven year, I reckon, and done for her, and taught her everything, wi'out caring about her. An' here I'm having linen spun, an' thinking all the while it'll make sheeting and table-clothing for her when she's married, an' she'll live i' the parish wi' us, and never go out of our sights — like a fool as I am for thinking aught about her, as is no better nor a cherry wi' a hard stone inside it."

"Nay, nay, thee mustna make much of a trifle," said Mr. Poyser, soothingly. "She's fond of us, I'll be bound; but she's young, an' gets things in her head as she can't rightly give account on. Them young fillies 'ull run away often wi'out knowing why."

Her unole's answers, however, had had another effect on

Hetty besides that of disappointing her and making her cry. She knew quite well whom he had in his mind in his allusions to marriage, and to a sober, solid husband; and when she was in her bedroom again, the possibility of her marrying Adam presented itself to her in a new light. In a mind where no strong sympathies are at work, where there is no supreme sense of right to which the agitated nature can cling and steady itself to quiet endurance, one of the first results of sorrow is a desperate vague clutching after any deed that will change the actual condition. Poor Hetty's vision of consequences, at no time more than a narrow fantastic calculation of her own probable pleasures and pains, was now quite shut out by reckless irritation under present suffering, and she was ready for one of those convulsive, motiveless actions by which wretched men and women leap from a temporary sorrow into a life-long misery.

Why should she not marry Adam? She did not care what she did, so that it made some change in her life. She felt confident that he would still want to marry her, and any further thought about Adam's happiness in the matter had never yet visited her.

"Strange!" perhaps you will say, "this rush of impulse towards a course that might have seemed the most repugnant to her present state of mind, and in only the second night of her sadness!"

Yes, the actions of a little trivial soul like Hetty's, struggling amidst the serious, sad destinies of a human being, *are* strange. So are the motions of a little vessel without ballast tossed about on a stormy sea. How pretty it looked with its party-colored sail in the sunlight, moored in the quiet bay!

"Let that man bear the loss who loosed it from its moorings."

But that will not save the vessel—the pretty thing that might have been a lasting joy.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## MRS. POYSER "HAS HER SAY OUT."

THE next Saturday evening there was much excited discussion at the Donnithorne Arms concerning an incident which had occurred that very day — no less than a second appearance of the smart man in top-boots, said by some to be a mere farmer in treaty for the Chase Farm, by others to be the future steward; but by Mr. Casson himself, the personal witness to the stranger's visit, pronounced contemptuously to be nothing better than a bailiff, such as Satchell had been before him. No one had thought of denying Mr. Casson's testimony to the fact that he had seen the stranger, nevertheless he proffered various corroborating circumstances.

"I see him myself," he said; "I see him coming along by the Crab-tree meadow on a bald-faced hoss. I'd just been t' hev a pint — it was half after ten i' the forenoon, when I hev my pint as reg'lar as the clock — and I says to Knowles, as druv up with his wagon, 'You'll get a bit o' barley to-day, Knowles, I says, 'if you look about you;' and then I went round by the rick-yard, and towart the Treddles'on road; and just as I come up by the big ash-tree, I see the man i' top-boots coming along on a bald-faced hoss — I wish I may never stir if I didn't. And I stood still till he come up, and I says, 'Good-morning, sir,' I says, for I wanted to hear the turn of his tongue, as I might know whether he was a this-country-man; so I says, 'Good-morning, sir: it 'll 'old hup for the barley this morning, I think. There'll be a bit got hin, if we've good luck.' And he says, 'Eh, ye may be raight, there's noo tallin',' he says; and I knowed by that" — here Mr. Casson gave a wink — "as he didn't come from a hundred mile off. I dare say he'd think me a hodd talker, as you Loamshire folks allays does hany one as talks the right language."

"The right language!" said Bartle Massey, contemptuously. "You're about as near the right language as a pig's squeaking is like a tune played on a key-bugle."

"Well, I don't know," answered Mr. Casson, with an angry smile. "I should think a man as has lived among the gentry

from a by, is likely to know what's the right language pretty nigh as well as a schoolmaster."

"Ay, ay, man," said Bartle, with a tone of sarcastic consolation, "you talk the right language for *you*. When Mike Holdsworth's goat says ba-a-a, it's all right—it 'ud be unnatural for it to make any other noise."

The rest of the party being Loamshire men, Mr. Casson had the laugh strongly against him, and wisely fell back on the previous question, which, far from being exhausted in a single evening, was renewed in the churchyard, before service, the next day, with the fresh interest conferred on all news when there is a fresh person to hear it; and that fresh hearer was Martin Poyser, who, as his wife said, "never went boozin' with that set at Casson's, a-sittin' soakin'-in drink, and looking as wise as a lot o' cod-fish wi' red faces."

It was probably owing to the conversation she had had with her husband on their way from church, concerning this problematic stranger, that Mrs. Poyser's thoughts immediately reverted to him when, a day or two afterwards, as she was standing at the house-door with her knitting, in that eager leisure which came to her when the afternoon cleaning was done, she saw the old Squire enter the yard on his black pony, followed by John the groom. She always cited it afterwards as a case of prevision, which really had something more in it than her own remarkable penetration, that the moment she set eyes on the Squire, she said to herself, "I shouldna wonder if he's come about that man as is a-going to take the Chase Farm, wanting Poysor to do something for him without pay. But Poyser's a fool if he does."

Something unwonted must clearly be in the wind, for the old Squire's visits to his tenantry were rare; and though Mrs. Poyser had during the last twelvemonth recited many imaginary speeches, meaning even more than met the ear, which she was quite determined to make to him the next time he appeared within the gates of the Hall Farm, the speeches had always remained imaginary.

"Good-day, Mrs. Poyser," said the old Squire, peering at her with his short-sighted eyes—a mode of looking at her which, as Mrs. Poyser observed, "allays aggravated her: it was as if you was a insect, and he was going to dab his finger-nail on you."

However, she said, "Your servant, sir," and courtesied with an air of perfect deference as she advanced towards him: she was not the woman to misbehave towards her betters, and fly in the face of the catechism, without severe provocation.

"Is your husband at home, Mrs. Poyser?"

"Yes, sir; he's only i' the rick-yard. I'll send for him in a minute, if you'll please to get down and step in."

"Thank you; I will do so. I want to consult him about a little matter; but you are quite as much concerned in it, if not more. I must have your opinion too."

"Hetty, run and tell your uncle to come in," said Mrs. Poyser, as they entered the house, and the old gentleman bowed low in answer to Hetty's courtesy; while Totty, conscious of a pinafore stained with gooseberry jam, stood hiding her face against the clock, and peeping round furtively.

"What a fine old kitchen this is!" said Mr. Donnithorne, looking round admiringly. He always spoke in the same deliberate, well-chiselled, polite way, whether his words were sugary or venomous. "And you keep it so exquisitely clean, Mrs. Poyser. I like these premises, do you know, beyond any on the estate."

"Well, sir, since you're fond of 'em, I should be glad if you'd let a bit o' repairs be done to 'em, for the boarding's i' that state, as we're like to be eaten up wi' rats and mice; and the cellar, you may stan' up to your knees i' water in't, if you like to go down; but perhaps you'd rather believe my words. Won't you please to sit down, sir?"

"Not yet; I must see your dairy. I have not seen it for years, and I hear on all hands about your fine cheese and butter," said the Squire, looking politely unconscious that there could be any question on which he and Mrs. Poyser might happen to disagree. "I think I see the door open, there: you must not be surprised if I cast a covetous eye on your cream and butter. I don't expect that Mrs. Satchell's cream and butter will bear comparison with yours."

"I can't say, sir, I'm sure. It's seldom I see other folks's butter, though there's some on it as one's no need to see — the smell's enough."

"Ah, now this I like," said Mr. Donnithorne, looking round at the damp temple of cleanliness, but keeping near the door. "I'm sure I should like my breakfast better if I knew the butter and cream came from this dairy. Thank you, that really is a pleasant sight. Unfortunately, my slight tendency to rheumatism makes me afraid of damp: I'll sit down in your comfortable kitchen. Ah, Poyser, how do you do? In the midst of business, I see, as usual. I've been looking at your wife's beautiful dairy — the best manager in the parish, is she not?"



Mr. Poyser had just entered in shirt-sleeves and open waist-coat, with a face a shade redder than usual, from the exertion of "pitching." As he stood, red, rotund, and radiant, before the small, wiry, cool, old gentleman, he looked like a prize apple by the side of a withered crab.

"Will you please to take this chair, sir?" he said, lifting his father's arm-chair forward a little: "you'll find it easy."

"No, thank you, I never sit in easy-chairs," said the old gentleman, seating himself on a small chair near the door. "Do you know, Mrs. Poyser—sit down, pray, both of you—I've been far from contented, for some time, with Mrs. Satchell's dairy management. I think she has not a good method, as you have."

"Indeed, sir, I can't speak to that," said Mrs. Poyser, in a hard voice, rolling and unrolling her knitting, and looking icily out of the window, as she continued to stand opposite the Squire. Poyser might sit down if he liked, she thought: *she* wasn't going to sit down, as if she'd give in to any such smooth-tongued palaver. Mr. Poyser, who looked and felt the reverse of icy, did sit down in his three-cornered chair.

"And now, Poyser, as Satchell is laid up, I am intending to let the Chase Farm to a respectable tenant. I'm tired of having a farm on my own hands—nothing is made the best of in such cases, as you know. A satisfactory bailiff is hard to find; and I think you and I, Poyser, and your excellent wife here, can enter into a little arrangement in consequence, which will be to our mutual advantage."

"Oh," said Mr. Poyser, with a good-natured blankness of imagination as to the nature of the arrangement.

"If I'm called upon to speak, sir," said Mrs. Poyser, after glancing at her husband with pity at his softness, "you know better than me; but I don't see what the Chase Farm is t' us—we've cumber enough wi' our own farm. Not but what I'm glad to hear o' anybody respectable coming into the parish: there's some as ha' been brought in as hasn't been looked on i' that character."

"You're likely to find Mr. Thurle an excellent neighbor, I assure you: such a one as you will feel glad to have accommodated by the little plan I'm going to mention; especially as I hope you will find it as much to your own advantage as his."

"Indeed, sir, if it's anything t' our advantage, it'll be the first offer o' the sort I've heared on. It's them as take advantage that get advantage i' this world, I think: folks have to wait long enough afore it's brought to 'em."

"The fact is, Poyser," said the Squire, ignoring Mrs. Poyser's theory of worldly prosperity, "there is too much dairy land, and too little plough land, on the Chase Farm, to suit Thurle's purpose — indeed, he will only take the farm on condition of some change in it: his wife, it appears, is not a clever dairy-woman, like yours. Now, the plan I'm thinking of is to effect a little exchange. If you were to have the Hollow Pastures, you might increase your dairy, which must be so profitable under your wife's management; and I should request you, Mrs. Poyser, to supply my house with milk, cream, and butter, at the market prices. On the other hand, Poyser, you might let Thurle have the Lower and Upper Ridges, which really, with our wet seasons, would be a good riddance for you. There is much less risk in dairy land than corn land."

Mr. Poyser was leaning forward, with his elbows on his knees, his head on one side, and his mouth screwed up — apparently absorbed in making the tips of his fingers meet so as to represent with perfect accuracy the ribs of a ship. He was much too acute a man not to see through the whole business, and to foresee perfectly what would be his wife's view of the subject; but he disliked giving unpleasant answers: unless it was on a point of farming practice, he would rather give up than have a quarrel, any day; and, after all, it mattered more to his wife than to him. So, after a few moments' silence, he looked up at her and said mildly, "What dost say?"

Mrs. Poyser had had her eyes fixed on her husband with cold severity during his silence, but now she turned away her head with a toss, looked icily at the opposite roof of the cowshed, and spearing her knitting together with the loose pin, held it firmly between her clasped hands.

"Say? Why, I say you may do as you like about giving up any o' your corn land afore your lease is up, which it won't be for a year come next Michaelmas, but I'll not consent to take more dairy work into my hands, either for love or money; and there's nayther love nor money here, as I can see, on'y other folks's love o' theirselves, and the money as is to go into other folks's pockets. I know there's them as is born 't own the land, and them as is born to sweat on't" — here Mrs. Poyser paused to gasp a little — "and I know it's christened folks's duty to submit to their betters as fur as flesh and blood 'ull bear it; but I'll not make a martyr o' myself, and wear myself to skin and bone, and worret myself

as if I was a churn wi' butter a-coming in't, for no landlord in England, not if he was King George himself."

"No, no, my dear Mrs. Poyser, certainly not," said the Squire, still confident in his own powers of persuasion, "you must not overwork yourself; but don't you think your work will rather be lessened than increased in this way? There is so much milk required at the Abbey, that you will have little increase of cheese and butter making from the addition to your dairy; and I believe selling the milk is the most profitable way of disposing of dairy produce, is it not?"

"Ay, that's true," said Mr. Poyser, unable to repress an opinion on a question of farming profits, and forgetting that it was not in this case a purely abstract question.

"I dare say," said Mrs. Poyser bitterly, turning her head half-way towards her husband, and looking at the vacant arm-chair — "I dare say it's true for men as sit i' th' chimney-corner and make believe as everything's cut wi' ins an' outs to fit int' everything else. If you could make a pudding wi' thinking o' the butter, it 'ud be easy getting dinner. How do I know whether the milk 'ull be wanted constant? What's to make me sure as the house won't be put o' board wage afore we're many months older, and then I may have to lie awake o' nights wi' twenty gallons o' milk on my mind — and Dingall 'ull take no more butter, let alone paying for it; and we must fat pigs till we're obliged to beg the butcher on our knees to buy 'em, and lose half o' 'em wi' the measles. And there's the fetchin' and carryin', as 'ud be welly half a day's work for a man an' hoss — *that's* to be took out o' the profits, I reckon? But there's folks 'ud hold a sieve under the pump and expect to carry away the water."

"That difficulty — about the fetchin' and carryin' — you will not have, Mrs. Poyser," said the Squire, who thought that this entrance into particulars indicated a distant inclination to compromise on Mrs. Poyser's part — "Bethell will do that regularly with the cart and pony."

"Oh, sir, begging your pardon, I've never been used t' having gentlefolks's servants coming about my back places, a-making love to both the gells at once, and keeping 'em with their hands on their hips listening to all manner o' gossip when they should be down on their knees a-scouring. If we're to go to ruin, it shanna be wi' having our back kitchen turned into a public."

"Well, Poyser," said the Squire, shifting his tactics, and looking as if he thought Mrs. Poyser had suddenly withdrawn

from the proceedings and left the room, "you can turn the Hollows into feeding-land. I can easily make another arrangement about supplying my house. And I shall not forget your readiness to accommodate your landlord as well as a neighbor. I know you will be glad to have your lease renewed for three years, when the present one expires; otherwise, I dare say Thurle, who is a man of some capital, would be glad to take both the farms, as they could be worked so well together. But I don't want to part with an old tenant like you."

To be thrust out of the discussion in this way would have been enough to complete Mrs. Poyser's exasperation, even without the final threat. Her husband, really alarmed at the possibility of their leaving the old place where he had been bred and born—for he believed the old Squire had small spite enough for anything—was beginning a mild remonstrance explanatory of the inconvenience he should find in having to buy and sell more stock, with—

"Well, sir, I think as it's rether hard" . . . when Mrs. Poyser burst in with the desperate determination to have her say out this once, though it were to rain notices to quit, and the only shelter were the workhouse.

"Then, sir, if I may speak—as, for all I'm a woman, and there's folks as thinks a woman's fool enough to stan' by an' look on while the men sign her soul away, I've a right to speak, for I make one quarter o' the rent, and save another quarter—I say, if Mr. Thurle's so ready to take farms under you, it's a pity but what he should take this, and see if he likes to live in a house wi' all the plagues o' Egypt in't—wi' the cellar full o' water, and frogs and toads hoppin' up the steps by dozens—and the floors rotten, and the rats and mice gnawing every bit o' cheese, and runnin' over our heads as we lie i' bed till we expect 'em to eat us up alive—as it's a mercy they hanna eat the children long ago. I should like to see if there's another tenant besides Poyser as 'ud put up wi' never having a bit o' repairs done till a place tumbles down—and not then, on'y wi' begging and praying, and having to pay half—and being strung up wi' the rent as it's much if he gets enough out o' the land to pay, for all he's put his own money into the ground beforehand. See if you'll get a stranger to lead such a life here as that: a maggot must be born i' the rotten cheese to like it, I reckon. You may run away from my words, sir," continued Mrs. Poyser, following the old Squire beyond the door—for after the first

moments of stunned surprise he had got up, and, waving his hand towards her with a smile, had walked out towards his pony. But it was impossible for him to get away immediately, for John was walking the pony up and down the yard, and was some distance from the causeway when his master beckoned.

"You may run away from my words, sir, and you may go spinnin' underhand ways o' doing us a mischief, for you've got Old Harry to your friend, though nobody else is, but I tell you for once as we're not dumb creatures to be abused and made money on by them as ha' got the lash i' their hands, for want o' knowing how t' undo the tackle. An' if I'm th' only one as speaks my mind, there's plenty o' the same way o' thinking i' this parish and the next to 't, for your name's no better than a brimstone match in everybody's nose — if it isna two-three old folks as you think o' saving your soul by giving 'em a bit o' flannel and a drop o' porridge. An' you may be right i' thinking it'll take but little to save your soul, for it'll be the smallest savin' y' iver made, wi' all your scrapin'."

There are occasions on which two servant-girls and a waggoner may be a formidable audience, and as the Squire rode away on his black pony, even the gift of short-sightedness did not prevent him from being aware that Molly and Nancy and Tim were grinning not far from him. Perhaps he suspected that sour old John was grinning behind him — which was also the fact. Meanwhile the bull-dog, the black-and-tan terrier, Alick's sheep-dog, and the gander hissing at a safe distance from the pony's heels, carried out the idea of Mrs. Poyser's solo in an impressive quartette.

Mrs. Poyser, however, had no sooner seen the pony move off than she turned round, gave the two hilarious damsels a look which drove them into the back kitchen, and, unspearing her knitting, began to knit again with her usual rapidity, as she re-entered the house.

"Thee'st done it now," said Mr. Poyser, a little alarmed and uneasy, but not without some triumphant amusement at his wife's outbreak.

"Yes, I know I've done it," said Mrs. Poyser; "but I've had my say out, and I shall be th' easier for't all my life. There's no pleasure i' living, if you're to be corked up forever, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel. I sha'n't repent saying what I think, if I live to be as old as th' old Squire; and there's little likelihoods — for it seems as if them as aren't wanted here are th' only folks as aren't wanted i' th' other world."

"But thee wutna like moving from th' old place, this Michaelmas twelvemonth," said Mr. Poyser, "and going into a strange parish, where thee know'st nobody. It'll be hard upon us both, and upo' father too."

"Eh, it's no use worreting; there's plenty o' things may happen between this and Michaelmas twelvemonth. The Captain may be master afore then, for what we know," said Mrs. Poyser, inclined to take an unusually hopeful view of an embarrassment which had been brought about by her own merit, and not by other people's fault.

"*I'm none for worreting,*" said Mr. Poyser, rising from his three-cornered chair, and walking slowly towards the door; "but I should be loath to leave th' old place, and the parish where I was bred and born, and father afore me. We should leave our roots behiud us, I doubt, and niver thrive again."

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### MORE LINKS.

THE barley was all carried at last, and the harvest suppers went by without waiting for the dismal black crop of beans. The apples and nuts were gathered and stored; the scent of whey departed from the farmhouses, and the scent of brewing came in its stead. The woods behind the Chase, and all the hedgerow trees, took on a solemn splendor under the dark low-hanging skies. Michaelmas was come, with its fragrant basketfuls of purple damsons, and its paler purple daisies, and its lads and lasses leaving or seeking service, and winding along between the yellow hedges, with their bundles under their arms. But though Michaelmas was come, Mr. Thurle, that desirable tenant, did not come to the Chase Farm, and the old Squire, after all, had been obliged to put in a new bailiff. It was known throughout the two parishes that the Squire's plan had been frustrated because the Poyser's had refused to be "put upon," and Mrs. Poyser's outbreak was discussed in all the farmhouses with a zest which was only heightened by frequent repetition. The news that "Bony" was come back from Egypt was comparatively insipid, and the repulse of the French in Italy was nothing to Mrs. Poyser's repulse of the old Squire. Mr. Irwine had heard a version of it in every parishioner's house, with the one exception of the

Chase. But since he had always, with marvellous skill, avoided any quarrel with Mr. Donnithorne, he could not allow himself the pleasure of laughing at the old gentleman's discomfiture with any one besides his mother, who declared that if she were rich she should like to allow Mrs. Poyser a pension for life, and wanted to invite her to the parsonage, that she might hear an account of the scene from Mrs. Poyser's own lips.

"No, no, mother," said Mr. Irwine; "it was a little bit of irregular justice on Mrs. Poyser's part, but a magistrate like me must not countenance irregular justice. There must be no report spread that I have taken notice of the quarrel, else I shall lose the little good influence I have over the old man."

"Well, I like that woman even better than her cream-cheeses," said Mrs. Irwine. "She has the spirit of three men, with that pale face of hers; and she says such sharp things too."

"Sharp! yes, her tongue is like a new-set razor. She's quite original in her talk, too; one of those nuntaught wits that help to stock a country with proverbs. I told you that capital thing I heard her say about Craig—that he was like a cock, who thought the sun had risen to hear him crow. Now that's a *Æsop's* fable in a sentence."

"But it will be a bad business if the old gentleman turns them out of the farm next Michaelmas, eh?" said Mrs. Irwine.

"Oh, that must not be; and Poyser is such a good tenant, that Donnithorne is likely to think twice, and digest his spleen rather than turn them out. But if he should give them notice at Lady Day, Arthur and I must move heaven and earth to mollify him. Such old parishioners as they are must not go."

"Ah, there's no knowing what may happen before Lady Day," said Mrs. Irwine. "It struck me on Arthur's birthday that the old man was a little shaken: he's eighty-three, you know. It's really an unconscionable age. It's only women who have a right to live as long as that."

"When they've got old-bachelor sons who would be forlorn without them," said Mr. Irwine, laughing, and kissing his mother's hand.

Mrs. Poyser, too, met her husband's occasional forebodings of a notice to quit with "There's no knowing what may happen before Lady Day:"—one of those undeniable general

propositions which are usually intended to convey a particular meaning very far from undeniable. But it is really too hard upon human nature that it should be held a criminal offence to imagine the death even of the king when he is turned eighty-three. It is not to be believed that any but the dullest Britons can be good subjects under that hard condition.

Apart from this foreboding, things went on much as usual in the Poyser household. Mrs. Poyser thought she noticed a surprising improvement in Hetty. To be sure, the girl got "closer tempered, and sometimes she seemed as if there'd be no drawing a word from her with cart-ropes;" but she thought much less about her dress, and went after the work quite eagerly, without any telling. And it was wonderful how she never wanted to go out now — indeed, could hardly be persuaded to go; and she bore her aunt's putting a stop to her weekly lesson in fine-work at the Chase, without the least grumbling or pouting. It must be, after all, that she had set her heart on Adam at last, and her sudden freak of wanting to be a lady's-maid must have been caused by some little pique or misunderstanding between them, which had passed by. For whenever Adam came to the Hall Farm, Hetty seemed to be in better spirits, and to talk more than at other times, though she was almost sullen when Mr. Craig or any other admirer happened to pay a visit there.

Adam himself watched her at first with trembling anxiety, which gave way to surprise and delicious hope. Five days after delivering Arthur's letter, he had ventured to go to the Hall Farm again — not without dread lest the sight of him might be painful to her. She was not in the house-place when he entered, and he sat talking to Mr. and Mrs. Poyser for a few minutes with a heavy fear on his heart that they might presently tell him Hetty was ill. But by-and-by there came a light step that he knew, and when Mrs. Poyser said, "Come, Hetty, where have you been?" Adam was obliged to turn round, though he was afraid to see the changed look there must be in her face. He almost started when he saw her smiling as if she were pleased to see him — looking the same as ever at a first glance, only that she had her cap on, which he had never seen her in before when he came of an evening. Still, when he looked at her again and again as she moved about or sat at her work, there was a change: the cheeks were as pink as ever, and she smiled as much as she had ever done of late, but there was something different in



her eyes, in the expression of her face, in all her movements, Adam thought—something harder, older, less child-like. "Poor thing!" he said to himself, "that's allays likely. It's because she's had her first heartache. But she's got a spirit to bear up under it. Thank God for that."

As the weeks went by, and he saw her always looking pleased to see him—turning up her lovely face towards him as if she meant him to understand that she was glad for him to come—and going about her work in the same equable way, making no sign of sorrow, he began to believe that her feeling towards Arthur must have been much slighter than he had imagined in his first indignation and alarm, and that she had been able to think of her girlish fancy that Arthur was in love with her and would marry her, as a folly of which she was timely cured. And it perhaps was, as he had sometimes in his more cheerful moments hoped it would be—her heart was really turning with all the more warmth towards the man she knew to have a serious love for her.

Possibly you think that Adam was not at all sagacious in his interpretations, and that it was altogether extremely unbecoming in a sensible man to behave as he did—falling in love with a girl who really had nothing more than her beauty to recommend her, attributing imaginary virtues to her, and even condescending to cleave to her after she had fallen in love with another man, waiting for her kind looks as a patient trembling dog waits for his master's eye to be turned upon him. But in so complex a thing as human nature, we must consider, it is hard to find rules without exceptions. Of course, I know that, as a rule, sensible men fall in love with the most sensible women of their acquaintance, see through all the pretty deceits of coquettish beauty, never imagine themselves loved when they are not loved, cease loving on all proper occasions, and marry the woman most fitted for them in every respect—indeed, so as to compel the approbation of all the maiden ladies in their neighborhood. But even to this rule an exception will occur now and then in the lapse of centuries, and my friend Adam was one. For my own part, however, I respect him none the less: nay, I think the deep love he had for that sweet, rounded, blossom-like, dark-eyed Hetty, of whose inward self he was really very ignorant, came out of the very strength of his nature, and not out of any inconsistent weakness. Is it any weakness, pray, to be wrought on by exquisite music?—to feel its wondrous harmonies searching the subtlest windings of your soul, the

delicate fibres of life where no memory can penetrate, and binding together your whole being past and present in one unspeakable vibration : melting you in one moment with all the tenderness, all the love that has been scattered through the toilsome years, concentrating in one emotion of heroic courage or resignation all the hard-learned lessons of self-re-nouncing sympathy, blending your present joy with past sorrow, and your present sorrow with all your past joy ? If not, then neither is it a weakness to be so wrought upon by the exquisite curves of a woman's cheek and neck and arms, by the liquid depths of her beseeching eyes, or the sweet childish pout of her lips. For the beauty of a lovely woman is like music : what can one say more ? Beauty has an expression beyond and far above the one woman's soul that it clothes, as the words of genius have a wider meaning than the thought that prompted them : it is more than a woman's love that moves us in a woman's eyes — it seems to be a far-off mighty love that has come near to us, and made speech for itself there ; the rounded neck, the dimpled arm, move us by something more than their prettiness — by their close kinship with all we have known of tenderness and peace. The noblest nature sees the most of this *impersonal* expression in beauty (it is needless to say that there are gentlemen with whiskers dyed and undyed who see none of it whatever), and for this reason, the noblest nature is often the most blinded to the character of the one woman's soul that the beauty clothes. Wheuce, I fear, the tragedy of human life is likely to continue for a long time to come, in spite of mental philosophers who are ready with the best receipts for avoiding all mistakes of the kind.

Our good Adam had no fine words into which he could put his feeling for Hetty : he could not disguise mystery in this way with the appearance of knowledge ; he called his love frankly a mystery, as you have heard him. He only knew that the sight and memory of her moved him deeply, touching the spring of all love and tenderness, all faith and courage within him. How could he imagine narrowness, selfishness, hardness in her ? He created the mind he believed in out of his own, which was large, unselfish, tender.

The hopes he felt about Hetty softened a little his feeling towards Arthur. Surely his attentions to Hetty must have been of a slight kind ; they were altogether wrong, and such as no man in Arthur's position ought to have allowed himself, but they must have had an air of playfulness about them,

which had probably blinded him to their danger, and had prevented them from laying any strong hold on Hetty's heart. As the new promise of happiness rose for Adam, his indignation and jealousy began to die out: Hetty was not made unhappy; he almost believed that she liked him best; and the thought sometimes crossed his mind that the friendship which had once seemed dead forever might revive in the days to come, and he would not have to say "good-by" to the grand old woods, but would like them better because they were Arthur's. For this new promise of happiness following so quickly on the shock of pain, had an intoxicating effect on the sober Adam, who had all his life been used to much hardship and moderate hope. Was he really going to have an easy lot after all? It seemed so; for at the beginning of November, Jonathan Burge, finding it impossible to replace Adam, had at last made up his mind to offer him a share in the business, without further condition than that he should continue to give his energies to it, and renounce all thought of having a separate business of his own. Son-in-law or no son-in-law, Adam had made himself too necessary to be parted with, and his headwork was so much more important to Burge than his skill in handicraft, that his having the management of the woods made little difference in the value of his services; and as to the bargains about the Squire's timber, it would be easy to call in a third person. Adam saw here an opening into a broadening path of prosperous work, such as he had thought of with ambitious longing ever since he was a lad: he might come to build a bridge, or a town-hall, or a factory, for he had always said to himself that Jonathan Burge's building business was like an acorn, which might be the mother of a great tree. So he gave his hand to Burge on that bargain, and went home with his mind full of happy visions, in which (my refined reader will perhaps be shocked when I say it) the image of Hetty hovered, and smiled over plans for seasoning timber at a trifling expense, calculations as to the cheapening of bricks per thousand by water-carriage, and a favorite scheme for the strengthening of roofs and walls with a peculiar form of iron girder. What then? Adam's enthusiasm lay in these things; and our love is inwrought in our enthusiasm as electricity is inwrought in the air, exalting its power by a subtle presence.

Adam would be able to take a separate house now, and provide for his mother in the old one; his prospects would justify his marrying very soon, and if Dinah consented to have

Seth, their mother would perhaps be more contented to live apart from Adam. But he told himself that he would not be hasty—he would not try Hetty's feeling for him until it had had time to grow strong and firm. However, to-morrow, after church, he would go to the Hall Farm and tell them the news. Mr. Poyser, he knew, would like it better than a five-pound note, and he should see if Hetty's eyes brightened at it. The months would be short with all he had to fill his mind, and this foolish eagerness which had come over him of late must not hurry him into any premature words. Yet when he got home and told his mother the good news, and ate his supper, while she sat by almost crying for joy, and wanting him to eat twice as much as usual because of this good-luck, he could not help preparing her gently for the coming change, by talking of the old house being too small for them all to go on living in it always.

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE BETROTHAL.

It was a dry Sunday, and really a pleasant day for the 2d of November. There was no sunshine, but the clouds were high, and the wind was so still that the yellow leaves which fluttered down from the hedgerow elms must have fallen from pure decay. Nevertheless, Mrs. Poyser did not go to church, for she had taken a cold too serious to be neglected; only two winters ago she had been laid up for weeks with a cold; and since his wife did not go to church, Mr. Poyser considered that on the whole it would be as well for him to stay away too and "keep her company." He could perhaps have given no precise form to the reasons that determined this conclusion; but it is well known to all experienced minds that our finest convictions are often dependent on subtle impressions for which words are quite too coarse a medium. However it was, no one from the Poyser family went to church that afternoon except Hetty and the boys; yet Adam was bold enough to join them after church, and say that he would walk home with them, though all the way through the village he appeared to be chiefly occupied with Marty and Tommy, telling them about the squirrels in Binton

Coppice, and promising to take them there some day. But when they came to the fields he said to the boys, "Now, then, which is the stoutest walker? Him as gets to th' home-gate first shall be the first to go with me to Binton Coppice on the donkey. But Tommy must have the start up to the next stile, because he's the smallest."

Adam had never behaved so much like a determined lover before. As soon as the boys had both set off, he looked down at Hetty, and said, "Won't you hang on my arm, Hetty?" in a pleading tone, as if he had already asked her and she had refused. Hetty looked up at him smilingly and put her round arm through his in a moment. It was nothing to her — putting her arm through Adam's; but she knew he cared a great deal about having her arm through his, and she wished him to care. Her heart beat no faster, and she looked at the half-bare hedgerows and the ploughed field with the same sense of oppressive dulness as before. But Adam scarcely felt that he was walking; he thought Hetty must know that he was pressing her arm a little — a very little; words rushed to his lips that he dared not utter — that he had made up his mind not to utter yet; and so he was silent for the length of that field. The calm patience with which he had once waited for Hetty's love, content only with her presence and the thought of the future, had forsaken him since that terrible shock nearly three months ago. The agitations of jealousy had given a new restlessness to his passion — had made fear and uncertainty too hard almost to bear. But though he might not speak to Hetty of his love, he would tell her about his new prospects, and see if she would be pleased. So when he was enough master of himself to talk, he said —

"I'm going to tell your uncle some news that'll surprise him, Hetty; and I think he'll be glad to hear it too."

"What's that?" Hetty said, indifferently.

"Why, Mr. Burge has offered me a share in his business, and I'm going to take it."

There was a change in Hetty's face, certainly not produced by any agreeable impression from this news. In fact she felt a momentary annoyance and alarm; for she had so often heard it hinted by her uncle that Adam might have Mary Burge and a share in the business any day if he liked, that she associated the two objects now, and the thought immediately occurred that perhaps Adam had given her up because of what had happened lately, and had turned towards Mary Burge. With that thought, and before she had time to remember any

reasons why it could not be true, came a new sense of forsakenness and disappointment: the one thing—the one person—her mind had rested on in its dull weariness, had slipped away from her, and peevish misery filled her eyes with tears. She was looking on the ground, but Adam saw her face, saw the tears, and before he had finished saying, "Hetty, dear Hetty, what are you crying for?" his eager rapid thought had flown through all the causes conceivable to him, and had at last alighted on half the true one. Hetty thought he was going to marry Mary Burge—she didn't like him to marry—perhaps she didn't like him to marry any one but herself? All caution was swept away—all reason for it was gone, and Adam could feel nothing but trembling joy. He leaned towards her and took her hand, as he said—

"I could afford to be married now, Hetty—I could make a wife comfortable; but I shall never want to be married if you won't have me."

Hetty looked up at him, and smiled through her tears as she had done to Arthur that first evening in the wood, when she had thought he was not coming, and yet he came. It was a feebler relief, a feebler triumph she felt now, but the great dark eyes and the sweet lips were as beautiful as ever, perhaps more beautiful, for there was a more luxuriant womanliness about Hetty of late. Adam could hardly believe in the happiness of that moment. His right hand held her left, and he pressed her arm close against his heart as he leaned down towards her.

"Do you really love me, Hetty? Will you be my own wife, to love and take care of as long as I live?"

Hetty did not speak, but Adam's face was very close to hers, and she put up her round cheek against his, like a kitten. She wanted to be caressed—she wanted to feel as if Arthur were with her again.

Adam cared for no words after that, and they hardly spoke through the rest of the walk. He only said, "I may tell your uncle and aunt, mayn't I, Hetty?" and she said, "Yes."

The red fire-light on the hearth at the Hall Farm shone on joyful faces that evening, when Hetty was gone up-stairs and Adam took the opportunity of telling Mr. and Mr. Poyser and the grandfather that he saw his way to maintaining a wife now, and that Hetty had consented to have him.

"I hope you have no objections against me for her husband," said Adam; "I'm a poor man as yet, but she shall want nothing as I can work for."

"Objections?" said Mr. Poyser, while the grandfather leaned forward and brought out his long "Nay, nay." "What objections can we ha' to yon, lad? Never mind your being poorish as yet; there's money in your head-piece as there's money i' the sown field, but it must ha' time. You'n got enough to begin on, and we can do a deal tow'rt the bit o' furniture you'll want. Thee'st got feathers and linen to spare — plenty, eh?"

This question was of course addressed to Mrs. Poyser, who was wrapped up in a warm shawl, and was too hoarse to speak with her usual facility. At first she only nodded emphatically, but she was presently unable to resist the temptation to be more explicit.

"It 'ud be a poor tale if I hadna feathers and linen," she said, hoarsely, "when I never sell a fowl but what's plucked, and the wheel's a-going every day o' the week."

"Come, my wench," said Mr. Poyser, when Hetty came down, "come and kiss us, and let us wish you luck."

Hetty went very quietly and kissed the big good-natured man.

"There!" he said, patting her on the back, "go and kiss your aunt and your grandfather. I'm as wishful t' have you settled well as if you was my own daughter; and so's your aunt, I'll be bound, for she's done by you this seven 'ear, Hetty, as if you'd boen her own. Come, come, now," he went on, becoming jocose, as soon as Hetty had kissed her aunt and the old man, "Adam wants a kiss too, I'll warrant, and he's a right to one now."

Hetty turned away, smiling, towards her empty chair.

"Come, Adam, then, take one," persisted Mr. Poyser, "else y' arena half a man."

Adam got up, blushing like a small maiden — great strong fellow as he was — and, putting his arm round Hetty, stooped down and gently kissed her lips.

It was a pretty scene in the red fire-light: for there were no candles; why should there be, when the fire was so bright, and was reflected from all the pewter and the polished oak? No one wanted to work on a Sunday evening. Even Hetty felt something like contentment in the midst of all this love. Adam's attachment to her, Adam's caress, stirred no passion in her, were no longer enough to satisfy her vanity; but they were the best her life offered her now — they promised her some change.

There was a great deal of discussion before Adam went

away, about the possibility of his finding a house that would do for him to settle in. No house was empty except the one next to Will Maskery's in the village, and that was too small for Adam now. Mr. Poyser insisted that the best plan would be for Seth and his mother to move, and leave Adam in the old home, which might be enlarged after a while, for there was plenty of space in the woodyard and garden; but Adam objected to turning his mother out.

"Well, well," said Mr. Poyser at last, "we needna fix everything to-night. We must take time to consider. You caana think o' getting married afore Easter. I'm not for long courtships, but there must be a bit o' time to make things comfortable."

"Ay, to be sure," said Mrs. Poyser, in a hoarse whisper; "Christian folks can't be married like cuckoos, I reckon."

"I'm a bit daunted, though," said Mr. Poyser, "when I think as we may have notice to quit, and belike be forced to take a farm twenty mile off."

"Eh," said the old man, staring at the floor, and lifting his hands up and down, while his arms rested on the elbows of his chair, "it's a poor tale if I mun leave th' ould spot, an' be buried in a strange parish. An' you'll happen ha' double rates to pay," he added, looking up at his son.

"Well, thee mustna fret beforehand, father," said Martin the younger. "Happen the Captain 'ull come home and make our peace wi' th' old Squire. I build upo' that, for I know the Captain 'll see folks righted if he can."

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## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE HIDDEN DREAD.

It was a busy time for Adam — the time between the beginning of November and the beginning of February, and he could see little of Hetty, except on Sundays. But a happy time, nevertheless; for it was taking him nearer and nearer to March, when they were to be married; and all the little preparations for their new housekeeping marked the progress towards the longed-for day. Two new rooms had been "run up" to the old house, for his mother and Seth were to live with them after all. Lisbeth had cried so piteously at the



thought of leaving Adam, that he had gone to Hetty and asked her if, for the love of him, she would put up with his mother's ways, and consent to live with her. To his great delight, Hetty said, "Yes; I'd as soon she lived with us as not." Hetty's mind was oppressed at that moment with a worse difficulty than poor Lisbeth's ways, she could not care about them. So Adam was consoled for the disappointment he had felt when Seth had come back from his visit to Snowfield and said "it was no use — Dinah's heart wasna turned towards marrying." For when he told his mother that Hetty was willing they should all live together, and there was no more need of them to think of parting, she said, in a more contented tone than he had heard her speak in since it had been settled that he was to be married, "Eh, my lad, I'll be as still as th' ould tabby, an' ne'er want to do aught but th' offal work, as *she* wonna like t' do. An' then, we needna part the platters an' things, as ha' stood on the shelf together sin' afore thee wast born."

There was only one cloud that now and then came across Adam's sunshine: Hetty seemed unhappy sometimes. But to all his anxious, tender questions, she replied with an assurance that she was quite contented and wished nothing different; and the next time he saw her she was more lively than usual. It might be that she was a little overdone with work and anxiety now, for soon after Christmas Mrs. Poyser had taken another cold, which had brought on inflammation, and this illness had confined her to her room all through January. Hetty had to manage everything down-stairs, and half supply Molly's place too, while that good damsel waited on her mistress; and she seemed to throw herself so entirely into her new functions, working with a grave steadiness which was new in her, that Mr. Poyser often told Adam she was wanting to show him what a good housekeeper he would have; but he "doubted the lass was o'er-doing it — she must have a bit o' rest when her aunt could come down-stairs."

This desirable event of Mrs. Poyser's coming down-stairs happened in the early part of February, when some mild weather thawed the last patch of snow on the Binton Hills. On one of these days, soon after her aunt came down, Hetty went to Treddlestone to buy some of the wedding things which were wanting, and which Mrs. Poyser had scolded her for neglecting, observing that she supposed "it was because they were not for th' outside, else she'd ha' bought 'em fast nough."

It was about ten o'clock when Hetty set off, and the slight hoar-frost that had whitened the hedges in the early morning had disappeared as the sun mounted the cloudless sky. Bright February days have a stronger charm of hope about them than any other days in the year. One likes to pause in the mild rays of the sun, and look over the gates at the patient plough-horses turning at the end of the furrow, and think that the beautiful year is all before one. The birds seem to feel just the same: their notes are as clear as the clear air. There are no leaves on the trees and hedgerows, but how green all the grassy fields are! and the dark purplish brown of the ploughed earth and of the bare branches is beautiful too. What a glad world this looks like, as one drives or rides along the valleys and over the hills! I have often thought so when, in foreign countries, where the fields and woods have looked to me like our English Loamshire — the rich land tilled with just as much care, the woods rolling down the gentle slopes to the green meadows — I have come on something by the roadside which has reminded me that I am not in Loamshire: an image of a great agony — the agony of the Cross. It has stood perhaps by the clustering apple-blossoms, or in the broad sunshine by the cornfield, or at a turning by the wood where a clear brook was gurgling below; and surely, if there came a traveller to this world who knew nothing of the story of man's life upon it, this image of agony would seem to him strangely out of place in the midst of this joyous nature. He would not know that hidden behind the apple-blossoms, or among the golden corn, or under the shrouding boughs of the wood, there might be a human heart beating heavily with anguish; perhaps a young blooming girl, not knowing where to turn for refuge from swift-advancing shame; understanding no more of this life of ours than a foolish lost lamb wandering farther and farther in the nightfall on the lonely heath; yet tasting the bitterest of life's bitterness.

Such things are sometimes hidden among the sunny fields and behind the blossoming orchards; and the sound of the gurgling brook, if you came close to one spot behind a small bush, would be mingled for your ear with a despairing human sob. No wonder man's religion has much sorrow in it: no wonder he needs a suffering God.

Hetty, in her red cloak and warm bonnet, with her basket in her hand, is turning towards a gate by the side of the Tredleston road, but not that she may have a more lingering enjoyment of the sunshine, and think with hope of the long

unfolding year. She hardly knows that the sun is shining; and for weeks, now, when she has hoped at all, it has been for something at which she herself trembles and shudders. She only wants to be out of the highroad, that she may walk slowly, and not care how her face looks, as she dwells on wretched thoughts; and through this gate she can get into a field-path behind the wide thick hedgerows. Her great dark eyes wander blankly over the fields like the eyes of one who is desolate, homeless, unloved, not the promised bride of a brave, tender man. But there are no tears in them: her tears were all wept away in the weary night, before she went to sleep. At the next stile the pathway branches off: there are two roads before her — one along by the hedgerow, which will by-and-by lead her into the road again; the other across the fields, which will take her much farther out of the way into the Scantlands, low shrouded pastures where she will see nobody. She chooses this, and begins to walk a little faster, as if she had suddenly thought of an object towards which it was worth while to hasten. Soon she is in the Scantlands, where the grassy land slopes gradually downwards, and she leaves the level ground to follow the slope. Farther on there is a clump of trees on the low ground, and she is making her way towards it. No, it is not a clump of trees, but a dark shrouded pool, so full with the wintry rains that the under boughs of the elder-bushes lie low beneath the water. She sits down on the grassy bank, against the stooping stem of the great oak that hangs over the dark pool. She has thought of this pool often in the nights of the month that has just gone by, and now at last she is come to see it. She clasps her hands round her knees and leans forward, and looks earnestly at it, as if trying to guess what sort of bed it would make for her young limbs.

No, she has not courage to jump into that cold watery bed, and if she had, they might find her — they might find out why she had drowned herself. There is but one thing left to her: she must go away, go where they can't find her.

After the first on-coming of her great dread, some weeks after her betrothal to Adam, she had waited and waited, in the blind vague hope that something would happen to set her free from her terror; but she could wait no longer. All the force of her nature had been concentrated on the one effort of concealment, and she had shrunk with irresistible dread from every course that could tend towards a betrayal of her miserable secret. Whenever the thought of writing to Arthur had

occurred to her, she had rejected it: he could do nothing for her that would shelter her from discovery and scorn among the relatives and neighbors who once more made all her world, now her airy dream had vanished. Her imagination no longer saw happiness with Arthur, for he could do nothing that would satisfy or soothe her pride. No, something else would happen — something *must* happen — to set her free from this dread. In young, childish, ignorant souls there is constantly this blind trust in some unshapen chance: it is as hard to a boy or girl to believe that a great wretchedness will actually befall them, as to believe that they will die.

But now necessity was pressing hard upon her — now the time of her marriage was close at hand — she could no longer rest in this blind trust. She must run away; she must hide herself where no familiar eyes could detect her; and *then* the terror of wandering out into the world, of which she knew nothing, made the possibility of going to Arthur a thought which brought some comfort with it. She felt so helpless now, so unable to fashion the future for herself, that the prospect of throwing herself on him had a relief in it which was stronger than her pride. As she sat by the pool, and shuddered at the dark cold water, the hope that he would receive her tenderly — that he would care for her and think for her — was like a sense of lulling warmth, that made her for the moment indifferent to everything else; and she began now to think of nothing but the scheme by which she should get away.

She had had a letter from Dinah lately, full of kind words about the coming marriage, which she had heard of from Seth; and when Hetty had read this letter aloud to her uncle, he had said, "I wish Dinah 'ud come again now, for she'd be a comfort to your aunt when you're gone. What do you think, my wench, o' going to see her as soon as you can be spared, and persuading her to come back wi' you? You might happen persuade her wi' telling her as her aunt wants her, for all she writes o' not being able to come." Hetty had not liked the thought of going to Snowfield, and felt no longing to see Dinah, so she only said, "It's so far off, uncle." But now she thought this proposed visit would serve as a pretext for going away. She would tell her aunt when she got home again, that she should like the change of going to Snowfield for a week or ten days. And then, when she got to Stoniton, where nobody knew her, she would ask for the coach that would take her on the way to Windsor. Arthur was at Windsor, and she would go to him.

As soon as Hetty had determined on this scheme, she rose from the grassy bank of the pool, took up her basket, and went on her way to Treddleston, for she must buy the wedding things she had come out for, though she would never want them. She must be careful not to raise any suspicion that she was going to run away.

Mrs. Poyser was quite agreeably surprised that Hetty wished to go and see Dinah, and try to bring her back to stay over the wedding. The sooner she went the better, since the weather was pleasant now; and Adam, when he came in the evening, said, if Hetty could set off to-morrow, he would make time to go with her to Treddleston, and see her safe into the Stoniton coach.

"I wish I could go with you and take care of you, Hetty," he said, the next morning, leaning in at the coach door; "but you won't stay much beyond a week — the time 'ull seem long."

He was looking at her fondly, and his strong hand held hers in its grasp. Hetty felt a sense of protection in his presence — she was used to it now: if she could have had the past undone, and known no other love than her quiet liking for Adam! The tears rose as she gave him the last look.

"God bless her for loving me," said Adam, as he went on his way to work again, with Gyp at his heels.

But Hetty's tears were not for Adam — not for the anguish that would come upon him when he found she was gone from him forever. They were for the misery of her own lot, which took her away from this brave tender man who offered up his whole life to her, and threw her, a poor helpless suppliant, on the man who would think it a misfortune that she was obliged to cling to him.

At three o'clock that day, when Hetty was on the coach that was to take her, they said, to Leicester — part of the long, long way to Windsor — she felt dimly that she might be travelling all this weary journey towards the beginning of new misery.

Yet Arthur was at Windsor; he would surely not be angry with her. If he did not mind about her as he used to do, he had promised to be good to her.

## BOOK V.

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### CHAPTER XXXVI.

#### THE JOURNEY IN HOPE.

A LONG, lonely journey, with sadness in the heart; away from the familiar to the strange: that is a hard and dreary thing even to the rich, the strong, the instructed; a hard thing, even when we are called by duty, not urged by dread.

What was it then to Hetty? With her poor narrow thoughts, no longer melting into vague hopes, but pressed upon by the chill of definite fear; repeating again and again the same small round of memories — shaping again and again the same childish, doubtful images of what was to come — seeing nothing in this wide world but the little history of her own pleasures and pains; with so little money in her pocket, and the way so long and difficult. Unless she could afford always to go in the coaches — and she felt sure she could not, for the journey to Stoniton was more expensive than she had expected — it was plain that she must trust to carriers' carts or slow wagons; and what a time it would be before she could get to the end of her journey! The burly old coachman from Oakbourne, seeing such a pretty young woman among the outside passengers, had invited her to come and sit beside him; and feeling that it became him as a man and a coachman to open the dialogue with a joke, he applied himself as soon as they were off the stones to the elaboration of one suitable in all respects. After many cuts with his whip and glances at Hetty out of the corner of his eye, he lifted his lips above the edge of his wrapper and said, —

"He's pretty nigh six foot, I'll be bound, isna he, now?"

"Who?" said Hetty, rather startled.

"Why, the sweetheart as you've left behind, or else him as you're goin' arter — which is it?"

Hetty felt her face flushing and then turning pale. She thought this coachman must know something about her. He

must know Adam, and might tell him where she was gone, for it is difficult to country people to believe that those who make a figure in their own parish are not known everywhere else, and it was equally difficult to Hetty to understand the chance words could happen to apply closely to her circumstances. She was too frightened to speak.

"Heh, heh!" said the coachman, seeing that his joke was not so gratifying as he had expected, "you munna take it too serious; if he's behaved ill, get another. Such a pretty lass as you can get a sweetheart any day."

Hetty's fear was allayed by and by, when she found that the coachman made no further allusion to her personal concerns; but it still had the effect of preventing her from asking him what were the places on the road to Windsor. She told him she was only going a little way out of Stoniton, and when she got down at the inn where the coach stopped, she hastened away with her basket to another part of the town. When she had formed her plan of going to Windsor, she had not foreseen any difficulties except that of getting away; and after she had overcome this by proposing the visit to Dinah, her thoughts flew to the meeting with Arthur, and the question how he would behave to her — not resting on any probable incidents of the journey. She was too entirely ignorant of travelling to imagine any of its details, and with all her store of money — her three guineas — in her pocket, she thought herself amply provided. It was not until she found how much it cost her to get to Stoniton that she began to be alarmed about the journey, and then, for the first time, she felt her ignorance as to the places that must be passed on her way. Oppressed with this new alarm, she walked along the grim Stoniton streets, and at last turned into a shabby little inn, where she hoped to get a cheap lodging for the night. Here she asked the landlord if he could tell her what places she must go to, to get to Windsor.

"Well, I can't rightly say. Windsor must be pretty nigh London, for it's where the king lives," was the answer. "Anyhow, you'd best go t' Ashby next — that's south'ard. But there's as many places from here to London as there's houses in Stoniton, by what I can make out. I've never been no traveller myself. But how comes a lone young woman like you, to be thinking o' taking such a journey as that?"

"I'm going to my brother — he's a soldier at Windsor," said Hetty, frightened at the landlord's questioning look. "I can't afford to go by the coach; do you think there's a cart goes toward Ashby in the morning?"

"Yes, there may be carte if anybody knowed where they started from; but you might run over the town before you found out. You'd best set off and walk, and trust to summat overtaking you."

Every word sank like lead on Hetty's spirits; she saw the journey stretch bit by bit before her now; even to get to Ashby seemed a hard thing: it might take the day, for what she knew, and that was nothing to the rest of the journey. But it must be done—she must get to Arthur: oh, how she yearned to be again with somebody who would care for her! She who had never got up in the morning without the certainty of seeing familiar faces, people on whom she had an acknowledged claim; whose farthest journey had been to Rosseter on the pillion with her uncle; whose thoughts had always been taking holiday in dreams of pleasure, because all the business of her life was managed for her:—this kitten-like Hetty, who till a few months ago had never felt any other grief than that of envying Mary Burge a new ribbon, or being girded at by her aunt for neglecting Totty, must now make her toilsome way in loneliness, her peaceful home left behind forever, and nothing but a tremulous hope of distant refuge before her. Now for the first time, as she lay down to-night in the strange hard bed, she felt that her home had been a happy one, that her uncle had been very good to her, that her quiet lot at Hayslope among the things and people she knew, with her little pride in her one best gown and bonnet, and nothing to hide from any one, was what she would like to wake up to as a reality, and find that all the feverish life she had known besides was a short nightmare. She thought of all she had left behind with yearning regret for her own sake: her own misery filled her heart: there was no room in it for other people's sorrow. And yet, before the cruel letter, Arthur had been so tender and loving: the memory of that had still a charm for her, though it was no more than a soothing draught that just made pain bearable. For Hetty could conceive no other existence for herself in future than a hidden one, and a hidden life, even with love, would have had no delights for her; still less a life mingled with shame. She knew no romances, and had only a feeble share in the feelings which are the source of romance, so that well-read ladies may find it difficult to understand her state of mind. She was too ignorant of everything beyond the simple notions and habits in which she had been brought up, to have any more definite idea of her probable future than that Arthur would take care



of her somehow, and shelter her from anger and scorn. He would not marry her and make her a lady; and apart from that she could think of nothing he could give towards which she looked with longing and ambition.

The next morning she rose early, and taking only some milk and bread for her breakfast, set out to walk on the road towards Ashby, under a leaden-colored eky, with a narrowing streak of yellow, like a departing hope, on the edge of the horizon. Now in her faintness of heart at the length and difficulty of her journey, she was most of all afraid of spending her money, and becoming so destitute that she would have to ask people's charity; for Hetty had the pride not only of a proud nature but of a proud class — the class that pays the most poor-rates, and most shudders at the idea of profiting by a poor-rate. It had not yet occurred to her that she might get money for her locket and earrings which she carried with her, and she applied all her small arithmetic and knowledge of prices to calculating how many meals and how many rides were contained in her two guineas, and the odd shillings, which had a melancholy look, as if they were the pale ashes of the other bright-flaming coin.

For the first few miles out of Stoniton, she walked on bravely, always fixing on some tree or gate or projecting bush at the most distant visible point in the road as a goal, and feeling a faint joy when she had reached it. But when she came to the fourth milestone, the first she had happened to notice among the long grass by the roadside, and read that she was still only four miles beyond Stoniton, her courage sank. She had come only this little way, and yet felt tired, and almost hungry again in the keen morning air; for though Hetty was accustomed to much movement and exertion indoors, she was not used to long walks, which produced quite a different sort of fatigue from that of household activity. As she was looking at the milestone she felt some drops falling on her face — it was beginning to rain. Here was a new trouble which had not entered into her sad thoughts before; and quite weighed down by this sudden addition to her burden, she sat down on the step of a stile and began to sob hysterically. The beginning of hardship is like the first taste of bitter food — it seems for a moment unbearable; yet, if there is nothing else to satisfy our hunger, we take another bite and find it possible to go on. When Hetty recovered from her burst of weeping, she rallied her fainting courage: it was raining, and she must try to get on to a village where she

might find rest and shelter. Presently, as she walked on wearily, she heard the rumbling of heavy wheels behind her; a covered wagon was coming, creeping slowly along with a slouching driver cracking his whip beside the horses. She waited for it, thinking that if the wagoner were not a very sour-looking man, she would ask him to take her up. As the wagon approached her, the driver had fallen behind, but there was something in the front of the big vehicle which encouraged her. At any previous moment in her life she would not have noticed it; but now, the new susceptibility that suffering had awakened in her caused this object to impress her strongly. It was only a small white-and-liver colored spaniel which sat on the front ledge of the wagon, with large timid eyes, and an incessant trembling in the body, such as you may have seen in some of these small creatures. Hetty cared little for animals, as you know, but at this moment she felt as if the helpless timid creature had some fellowship with her, and without being quite aware of the reason, she was less doubtful about speaking to the driver, who now came forward — a large ruddy man, with a sack over his shoulders, by way of scarf or mantle.

"Could you take me up in your wagon, if you're going towards Ashby?" said Hetty. "I'll pay you for it."

"Aw," said the big fellow, with that slowly-dawning smile which belongs to heavy faces, "I can take y' up fawst enough wi'out bein' paid for 't if you dooant mind lyin' a bit closish a-top o' the wool-packs. Where do you coom from? and what do you want at Ashby?"

"I come from Stoniton. I'm going a long way — to Windsor."

"What! arter some service, or what?"

"Going to my brother — he's a soldier there."

"Well, I'm going no furdur nor Leicester — and fur enough too — but I'll take you, if you dooant mind being a bit long on the road. Th' hosses wooant feel *your* weight no more nor they feel the little doog there, as I puck up on the road a forn'tagoo. He war lost, I b'lieve, an's been all of a tremble iver sin'. Come, gi' us your basket, an' come behind and let me put y' in."

To lie on the wool-packs, with a cranny left between the curtains of the awning to let in the air, was luxury to Hetty now, and she half slept away the hours till the driver came to ask her if she wanted to get down and have "some victual;" he himself was going to eat his dinner at this "public."

Late at night they reached Leicester, and so this second day of Hetty's journey was past. She had spent no money except what she had paid for her food, but she felt that this slow journeying would be intolerable for her another day, and in the morning she found her way to a coach-office to ask about the road to Windsor, and see if it would cost her too much to go part of the distance by coach again. Yes! the distance was too great — the coaches were too dear — she must give them up; but the elderly clerk at the office, touched by her pretty anxious face, wrote down for her the names of the chief places she must pass through. This was the only comfort she got in Leicester, for the men stared at her as she went along the street, and for the first time in her life Hetty wished no one would look at her. She set out walking again; but this day she was fortunate, for she was soon overtaken by a carrier's cart which carried her to Hinckley, and by the help of a return chaise, with a drunken postilion, — who frightened her by driving like Jehu the son of Nimshi, and shouting hilarious remarks at her, twisting himself backwards on his saddle, — she was before night in the heart of woody Warwickshire: but still almost a hundred miles from Windsor, they told her. Oh what a large world it was, and what hard work for her to find her way in it! She went by mistake to Stratford-on-Avon, finding Stratford set down in her list of places, and then she was told she had come a long way out of the right road. It was not till the fifth day that she got to Stony Stratford. That seems but a slight journey as you look at the map, or remember your own pleasant travels to and from the meadowy banks of the Avon. But how wearily long it was to Hetty! It seemed to her as if this country of flat fields and hedgerows, and dotted houses, and villages, and market-towns — all so much alike to her indifferent eyes — must have no end, and she must go on wandering among them forever, waiting tired at toll-gates for some cart to come, and then finding the cart went only a little way — a very little way — to the miller's a mile off perhaps; and she hated going into the public-houses, where she must go to get food and ask questions, because there were always men lounging there, who stared at her and joked her rudely. Her body was very weary too with these days of new fatigue and anxiety; they had made her look more pale and worn than all the time of hidden dread she had gone through at home. When at last she reached Stony Stratford, her impatience and weariness had become too strong for her economical cau-

tion; she determined to take the coach for the rest of the way, though it should cost her all her remaining money. She would need nothing at Windsor but to find Arthur. When she had paid the fare for the last coach, she had only a shilling; and as she got down at the sign of the Green Man in Windsor at twelve o'clock in the middle of the seventh day, hungry and faint, the coachman came up, and begged her to "remember him." She put her hand in her pocket, and took out the shilling, but the tears came with the sense of exhaustion and the thought that she was giving away her last means of getting food, which she really required before she could go in search of Arthur. As she held out the shilling, she lifted up her dark tear-filled eyes to the coachman's face and said, "Can you give me back sixpence?"

"No, no," he said, gruffly, "never mind — put the shilling up again."

The landlord of the Green Man had stood near enough to witness this scene, and he was a man whose abundant feeding served to keep his good nature, as well as his person, in high condition. And that lovely tearful face of Hetty's would have found out the sensitive fibre in most men.

"Come, young woman, come in," he said, "and have a drop o' something; you're pretty well knocked up: I can see that."

He took her into the bar and said to his wife, "Here, miss, take this young woman into the parlor; she's a little overcome," — for Hetty's tears were falling fast. They were merely hysterical tears: she thought she had no reason for weeping now, and was vexed that she was too weak and tired to help it. She was at Windsor at last, not far from Arthur.

She looked with eager, hungry eyes at the bread and meat and beer that the landlady brought her, and for some minutes she forgot everything else in the delicious sensations of satisfying hunger and recovering from exhaustion. The landlady sat opposite to her as she ate, and looked at her earnestly. No wonder: Hetty had thrown off her bonnet, and her curls had fallen down: her face was all the more touching in its youth and beauty because of its weary look; and the good woman's eyes presently wandered to her figure, which in her hurried dressing on her journey she had taken no pains to conceal; moreover, the stranger's eye detects what the familiar unsuspecting eye leaves unnoticed.

"Why, you're not very fit for travelling," she said, glancing while she spoke at Hetty's ringless hand. "Have you come far?"

"Yes," said Hetty, roused by this question to exert more self-command, and feeling the better for the food she had taken. "I've come a good long way, and it's very tiring. But I'm better now. Could you tell me which way to go to this place?" Here Hetty took from her pocket a bit of paper: it was the end of Arthur's letter on which he had written his address.

While she was speaking, the landlord had come in, and had begun to look at her as earnestly as his wife had done. He took up the piece of paper which Hetty handed across the table, and read the address.

"Why, what do you want at this house?" he said. It is in the nature of innkeepers and all men who have no pressing business of their own, to ask as many questions as possible before giving any information.

"I want to see a gentleman as is there," said Hetty.

"But there's no gentleman there," returned the landlord. "It's shut up—been shut up this fortnight. What gentleman is it you want? Perhaps I can let you know where to find him."

"It's Captain Donnithorne," said Hetty, tremulously, her heart beginning to beat painfully at this disappointment of her hope that she should find Arthur at once.

"Captain Donnithorne? Stop a bit," said the landlord, slowly. "Was he in the Loamshire Militia? A tall young officer with a fairish skin and reddish whiskers—and had a servant by the name o' Pym?"

"Oh yes," said Hetty; "you know him—where is he?"

"A fine sight o' miles away from here: the Loamshire Militia's gone to Ireland; it's been gone this fortnight."

"Look there! she's fainting," said the landlady, hastening to support Hetty, who had lost her miserable consciousness and looked like a beautiful corpse. They carried her to the sofa and loosened her dress.

"Here's a bad business, I suspect," said the landlord, as he brought in some water.

"Ah, it's plain enough what sort of business it is," said the wife. "She's not a common flaunting dratchell, I can see that. She looks like a respectable country girl, and she comes from a good way off, to judge by her tongue. She talks something like that ostler we had that come from the north: he was as honest a fellow as we ever had about the house—they're all honest folks in the north."

"I never saw a prettier young woman in my life," said the

husband. "She's like a pictur in a shop-winder. It goes to one's 'eart to look at her."

"It 'ud have been a good deal better for her if she'd been uglier and had more conduct," said the landlady, who on any charitable construction must have been supposed to have more "conduct" than beauty. "But she's coming to again. Fetch a drop more water."

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE JOURNEY IN DESPAIR.

HETTY was too ill through the rest of that day for any questions to be addressed to her — too ill even to think with any distinctness of the evils that were to come. She only felt that all her hope was crushed, and that instead of having found a refuge she had only reached the borders of a new wilderness where no goal lay before her. The sensations of bodily sickness, in a comfortable bed, and with the tendance of the good-natured landlady, made a sort of respite for her; such a respite as there is in the faint weariness which obliges a man to throw himself on the sand, instead of toiling onward under the scorching sun.

But when sleep and rest had brought back the strength necessary for the keenness of mental suffering, — when she lay the next morning looking at the growing light which was like a cruel task-master returning to urge from her a fresh round of hated hopeless labor, — she began to think what course she must take, to remember that all her money was gone, to look at the prospect of further wandering among strangers with the new clearness shed on it by the experience of her journey to Windsor. But which way could she turn? It was impossible for her to enter into any service, even if she could obtain it: there was nothing but immediate beggary before her. She thought of a young woman who had been found against the church wall at Hayslope one Sunday, nearly dead with cold and hunger — a tiny infant in her arms: the woman was rescued and taken to the parish. "The parish!" You can perhaps hardly understand the effect of that word on a mind like Hetty's, brought up among people who were somewhat hard in their feelings even towards poverty, who lived among the fields, and had little pity for

want and rags as a cruel inevitable fate such as they sometimes seem in cities, but held them a mark of idleness and vice—and it was idleness and vice that brought burdens on the parish. To Hetty the “parish” was next to the prison in obloquy; and to ask anything of strangers—to beg—lay in the same far-off hideous region of intolerable shame that Hetty had all her life thought it impossible she could ever come near. But now the remembrance of that wretched woman whom she had seen herself, on her way from church, being carried into Joshua Rann’s, came back upon her with the new terrible sense that there was very little now to divide *her* from the same lot. And the dread of bodily hardship mingled with the dread of shame; for Hetty had the luxurious nature of a round, soft-coated pet animal.

How she yearned to be back in her safe home again, cherished and cared for as she had always been! Her aunt’s scolding about trifles would have been music to her ears now: she lounged for it: she used to hear it in a time when she had only trifles to hide. Could she be the same Hetty that used to make up the butter in the dairy with the Guelldres roses peeping in at the window—she, a runaway whom her friends would not open their doors to again, lying in this strange bed, with the knowledge that she had no money to pay for what she received, and must offer those strangers some of the clothes in her basket? It was then she thought of her locket and ear-rings, and seeing her pocket lie near, she reached it and spread the contents on the bed before her. There were the locket and ear-rings in the little velvet-lined boxes, and with them there was a beautiful silver thimble which Adam had bought her, the words “Remember me” making the ornament of the border; a steel purse, with her one shilling in it, and a small red-leather case, fastening with a strap. Those beautiful little ear-rings, with their delicate pearls and garnet, that she had tried in her ears with such longing in the bright sunshine on the 30th of July! She had no longing to put them in her ears now: her head with its dark rings of hair lay back languidly on the pillow, and the sadness that rested about her brow and eyes was something too hard for regretful memory. Yet she put her hands up to her ears: it was because there were some thin gold rings in them, which were also worth a little money. Yes, she could surely get some money for her ornaments: those Arthur had given her must have cost a great deal of money. The landlord and landlady had been good to her; perhaps they would help her to get the money for these things.

But this money would not keep her long: what should she do when it was gone? Where should she go? The horrible thought of want and beggary drove her once to think she would go back to her uncle and aunt, and ask them to forgive her and have pity on her. But she shrank from that idea again, as she might have shrunk from scorching metal: she could never endure that shame before her uncle and aunt, before Mary Burge, and the servants at the Chase, and the people at Broxton, and everybody who knew her. They should never know what had happened to her. What *could* she do? She would go away from Windsor—travel again as she had done the last week, and get among the flat green fields with the high hedges round them, where nobody could see her or know her; and there, perhaps, when there was nothing else she could do, she should get courage to drown herself in some pond like that in the Scantlands. Yes, she would get away from Windsor as soon as possible: she didn't like these people at the inn to know about her, to know that she had come to look for Captain Donnithorne: she must think of some reason to tell them why she had asked for him.

With this thought she began to put the things back into her pocket, meaning to get up and dress before the landlady came to her. She had her hand on the red-leather case, when it occurred to her that there might be something in this case which she had forgotten—something worth selling; for without knowing what she should do with her life, she craved the means of living as long as possible; and when we desire eagerly to find something, we are apt to search for it in hopeless places. No, there was nothing but common needles and pins, and dried tulip-petals between the paper leaves where she had written down her little money-accounts. But on one of these leaves there was a name, which, often as she had seen it before, now flashed on Hetty's mind like a newly-discovered message. The name was—*Dinah Morris, Snowfield*. There was a text above it, written, as well as the name, by Dinah's own hand with a little pencil, one evening that they were sitting together and Hetty happened to have the red case lying open before her. Hetty did not read the text now: she was only arrested by the name. Now, for the first time, she remembered without indifference the affectionate kindness Dinah had shown her, and those words of Dinah in the bed-chamber—that Hetty must think of her as a friend in trouble. Suppose she were to go to Dinah, and



ask her to help her? Dinah did not think about things as other people did: she was a mystery to Hetty, but Hetty knew she was always kind. She couldn't imagine Dinah's face turning away from her in dark reproof or scorn, Dinah's voice willingly speaking ill of her, or rejoicing in her misery as a punishment. Dinah did not seem to belong to that world of Hetty's, whose glance she dreaded like scorching fire. But even to her Hetty shrank from beseeching and confession: she could not prevail on herself to say, "I will go to Dinah;" she only thought of that as a possible alternative, if she had not courage for death.

The good landlady was amazed when she saw Hetty come down-stairs soon after herself, neatly dressed, and looking resolutely self-possessed. Hetty told her she was quite well this morning: she had only been very tired and overcome with her journey, for she had come a long way to ask about her brother, who had run away, and they thought he was gone for a soldier, and Captain Dounithorne might know, for he had been very kind to her brother once. It was a lame story, and the landlady looked doubtfully at Hetty as she told it; but there was a resolute air of self-reliance about her this morning, so different from the helpless prostration of yesterday, that the landlady hardly knew how to make a remark that might seem like prying into other people's affairs. She only invited her to sit down to breakfast with them, and in the course of it Hetty brought out her ear-rings and locket, and asked the landlord if he could help her to get money for them: her journey, she said, had cost her much more than she expected, and now she had no money to get back to her friends, which she wanted to do at once.

It was not the first time the landlady had seen the ornaments, for she had examined the contents of Hetty's pocket yesterday, and she and her husband had discussed the fact of a country girl having these beautiful things, with a stronger conviction than ever that Hetty had been miserably deluded by the fine young officer.

"Well," said the landlord, when Hetty had spread the precious trifles before him, "we might take 'em to the jeweller's shop, for there's one not far off; but Lord bless you, they wouldn't give you a quarter o' what the things are worth. And you wouldn't like to part with 'em?" he added, looking at her inquiringly.

"Oh, I don't mind," said Hetty, hastily, "so as I can get money to go back."

"And they might think the things were stolen, as you wanted to sell 'em," he went on; "for it isn't usual for a young woman like you to have fine jew'ellery like that."

The blood rushed to Hetty's face with anger. "I belong to respectable folks," she said; "I'm not a thief."

"No, that you aren't, I'll be bound," said the landlady; "and you'd no call to say that," looking indignantly at her husband. "The things were gev to her: that's plain enough to be seen."

"I didn't mean as I thought so," said the husband, apologetically, "but I said it was what the jeweller might think, and so he wouldn't be offering much money for 'em."

"Well," said the wife, "suppose you were to advance some money on the things yourself, and then if she liked to redeem 'em when she got home, she could. But if we heard nothing from her after two months, we might do as we liked with 'em."

I will not say that in this accommodating proposition the landlady had no regard whatever to the possible reward of her good-nature in the ultimate possession of the locket and ear-rings: indeed, the effect they would have in that case on the mind of the grocer's wife had presented itself with remarkable vividness to her rapid imagination. The landlord took up the ornaments and pushed out his lips in a meditative manner. He wished Hetty well, doubtless; but pray, how many of your well-wishers would decline to make a little gain out of you? Your landlady is sincerely affected at parting with you, respects you highly, and will really rejoice if any one else is generous to you; but at the same time she hands you a bill by which she gains as high a percentage as possible.

"How much money do you want to get home with, young woman?" said the well-wisher, at length.

"Three guineas," answered Hetty, fixing on the sum she set out with, for want of any other standard, and afraid of asking too much.

"Well, I've no objections to advance you three guineas," said the landlord; "and if you like to send it me back and get the jewellery again, you can, you know: the Green Man isn't going to run away."

"Oh yes, I'll be very glad if you'll give me that," said Hetty, relieved at the thought that she would not have to go to the jeweller's, and be stared at and questioned.

"But if you want the things again, you'll write before

long," said the landlady, "because when two months are up, we shall make up our minds as you don't want 'em."

"Yes," said Hetty, indifferently.

The husband and wife were equally content with this arrangement. The husband thought, if the ornaments were not redeemed, he could make a good thing of it by taking them to London and selling them: the wife thought she would coax the good man into letting her keep them. And they were accommodating Hetty, poor thing:—a pretty, respectable-looking young woman, apparently in a sad case. They declined to take anything for her food and bed: she was quite welcome. And at eleven o'clock Hetty said "Good-by" to them, with the same quiet, resolute air she had worn all the morning, mounting the coach that was to take her twenty miles back along the way she had come.

There is a strength of self-possession which is the sign that the last hope has departed. Despair no more leans on others than perfect contentment, and in despair pride ceases to be counteracted by the sense of dependence.

Hetty felt that no one could deliver her from the evils that would make life hateful to her; and no one, she said to herself, should ever know her misery and humiliation. No; she would not confess even to Dinah: she would wander out of sight, and drown herself where her body would never be found, and no one should know what had become of her.

When she got off this coach, she began to walk again, and take cheap rides in carts, and get cheap meals, going on and on without distinct purpose, yet strangely, by some fascination, taking the way she had come, though she was determined not to go back to her own country. Perhaps it was because she had fixed her mind on the grassy Warwickshire fields, with the bushy tree-studded hedgerows that made a hiding-place even in this leafless season. She went more slowly than she came, often getting over the stiles and sitting for hours under the hedgerows, looking before her with blank, beautiful eyes; fancying herself at the edge of a hidden pool, low down, like that in the Scantlands; wondering if it were very painful to be drowned, and if there would be anything worse after death than what she dreaded in life. Religious doctrines had taken no hold on Hetty's mind: she was one of those numerous people who have had godfathers and godmothers, learned their catechism, been confirmed, and gone to church every Sunday, and yet, for any practical result of strength in life, or trust in death, have never appropriated a single Christian idea or Chris-

tian feeling. You would misunderstand her thoughts during these wretched days, if you imagined that they were influenced either by religious fears or religious hopes.

She chose to go to Statford-on-Avon again, where she had gone before by mistake; for she remembered some grassy fields on her former way towards it — fields among which she thought she might find just the sort of pool she had in her mind. Yet she took care of her money still; she carried her basket; death seemed still a long way off, and life was so strong in her! She craved food and rest — she hastened towards them at the very moment she was picturing to herself the bank from which she would leap towards death. It was already five days since she had left Windsor, for she had wandered about, always avoiding speech or questioning looks, and recovering her air of proud self-dependence whenever she was under observation, choosing her decent lodging at night, and dressing herself neatly in the morning, and setting off on her way steadily, or remaining under shelter if it rained, as if she had a happy life to cherish.

And yet, even in her most self-conscious moments, the face was sadly different from that which had smiled at itself in the old specked glass, or smiled at others when they glanced at it admiringly. A hard and even fierce look had come in the eyes, though their lashes were as long as ever, and they had all their dark brightness. And the cheek was never dimpled with smiles now. It was the same rounded, pouting, childish prettiness, but with all love and belief in love departed from it — the sadder for its beauty, like that wondrous Medusa-face, with the passionate, passionless lips.

At last she was among the fields she had been dreaming of, on a long narrow pathway leading towards a wood. If there should be a pool in that wood! It would be better hidden than one in the fields. No, it was not a wood, only a wild brake, where there had once been gravel-pits, leaving mounds and hollows studded with brushwood and small trees. She roamed up and down, thinking there was perhaps a pool in every hollow before she came to it, till her limbs were weary, and she sat down to rest. The afternoon was far advanced, and the leaden sky was darkening, as if the sun were setting behind it. After a little while Hetty started up again, feeling that darkness would soon come on; and she must put off finding the pool till to-morrow, and make her way to some shelter for the night. She had quite lost her way in the fields, and might as well go in one direction as another, for

long," said the landlady, "because when two months are up, we shall make up our minds as you don't want 'em."

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Hetty felt that no one could deliver her from the evils that would make life hateful to her; and no one, she said to herself, should ever know her misery and humiliation. No; she would not confess even to Dinah: she would wander out of sight, and drown herself where her body would never be found, and no one should know what had become of her.

When she got off this coach, she began to walk again, and take cheap rides in carts, and get cheap meals, going on and on without distinct purpose, yet strangely, by some fascination, taking the way she had come, though she was determined not to go back to her own country. Perhaps it was because she had fixed her mind on the grassy Warwickshire fields, with the bushy tree-studded hedgerows that made a hiding-place even in this leafless season. She went more slowly than she came, often getting over the stiles and sitting for hours under the hedgerows, looking before her with blank, beautiful eyes; fancying herself at the edge of a hidden pool, low down, like that in the Scantlands; wondering if it were very painful to be drowned, and if there would be anything worse after death than what she dreaded in life. Religious doctrines had taken no hold on Hetty's mind: she was one of those numerous people who have had godfathers and godmothers, learned their catechism, been confirmed, and gone to church every Sunday, and yet, for any practical result of strength in life, or trust in death, have never appropriated a single Christian idea or Chris-

tian feeling. You would misunderstand her thoughts during these wretched days, if you imagined that they were influenced either by religious fears or religious hopes.

She chose to go to Statford-on-Avon again, where she had gone before by mistake; for she remembered some grassy fields on her former way towards it — fields among which she thought she might find just the sort of pool she had in her mind. Yet she took care of her money still; she carried her basket: death seemed still a long way off, and life was so strong in her! She craved food and rest — she hastened towards them at the very moment she was picturing to herself the bank from which she would leap towards death. It was already five days since she had left Windsor, for she had wandered about, always avoiding speech or questioning looks, and recovering her air of proud self-dependence whenever she was under observation, choosing her decent lodging at night, and dressing herself neatly in the morning, and setting off on her way steadily, or remaining under shelter if it rained, as if she had a happy life to cherish.

And yet, even in her most self-conscious moments, the face was sadly different from that which had smiled at itself in the old specked glass, or smiled at others when they glanced at it admiringly. A hard and even fierce look had come in the eyes, though their lashes were as long as ever, and they had all their dark brightness. And the cheek was never dimpled with smiles now. It was the same rounded, ponting, childish prettiness, but with all love and belief in love departed from it — the sadder for its beauty, like that wondrous Medusa-face, with the passionate, passionless lips.

At last she was among the fields she had been dreaming of, on a long narrow pathway leading towards a wood. If there should be a pool in that wood! It would be better hidden than one in the fields. No, it was not a wood, only a wild brake, where there had once been gravel-pits, leaving mounds and hollows studded with brushwood and small trees. She roamed up and down, thinking there was perhaps a pool in every hollow before she came to it, till her limbs were weary, and she sat down to rest. The afternoon was far advanced, and the leaden sky was darkening, as if the sun were setting behind it. After a little while Hetty started up again, feeling that darkness would soon come on; and she must put off finding the pool till to-morrow, and make her way to some shelter for the night. She had quite lost her way in the fields, and might as well go in one direction as another, for

anight she knew. She walked through field after field, and no village, no house was in sight; but *there*, at the corner of this pasture, there was a break in the hedges; the land seemed to dip down a little, and two trees leaned towards each other across the opening. Hetty's heart gave a great beat as she thought there must be a pool there. She walked towards it heavily over the tufted grass, with pale lips and a sense of trembling: it was as if the thing were come in spite of herself, instead of being the object of her search.

There it was, black under the darkening sky: no motion, no sound near. She set down her basket, and then sank down herself on the grass, trembling. The pool had its wintry depth now: by the time it got shallow, as she remembered the pools did at Hayslope, in the summer, no one could find out that it was her body. But then there was her basket — she must hide that too: she must throw it into the water — make it heavy with stones first, and then throw it in. She got up to look about for stones, and soon brought five or six, which she laid down beside her basket, and then sat down again. There was no need to hurry — there was all the night to drown herself in. She sat leaning her elbow on the basket. She was weary, hungry. There were some buns in her basket — three, which she had supplied herself with at the place where she ate her dinner. She took them out now, and ate them eagerly, and then sat still again, looking at the pool. The soothed sensation that came over her from the satisfaction of her hunger, and this fixed dreamy attitude, brought on drowsiness, and presently her head sank down on her knees. She was fast asleep.

When she awoke it was deep night, and she felt chill. She was frightened at this darkness — frightened at the long night before her. If she *could* but throw herself into the water! No, not yet. She began to walk about that she might get warm again, as if she would have more resolution then. Oh how long the time was in that darkness! The bright hearth and the warmth and the voices of home, — the secure uprising and lying down, — the familiar fields, the familiar people, the Sundays and holidays with their simple joys of dress and feasting, — all the sweets of her young life rushed before her now, and she seemed to be stretching her arms towards them across a great gulf. She set her teeth when she thought of Arthur: she cursed him, without knowing what her cursing would do: she wished he too might know desolation, and cold, and a life of shame that he dared not end by death.

The horror of this cold, and darkness, and solitude — out of all human reach — became greater every long minute: it was almost as if she were dead already, and knew that she was dead, and longed to get back to life again. But no: she was alive still; she had not taken the dreadful leap. She felt a strange contradictory wretchedness and exultation, wretchedness, that she did not dare to face death; exultation: that she was still in life — that she might yet know light and warmth again. She walked backwards and forwards to warm herself, beginning to discern something of the objects around her, as her eyes became accustomed to the night: the darker line of the hedge, the rapid motion of some living creature — perhaps a field-mouse — rushing across the grass. She no longer felt as if the darkness hedged her in: she thought she could walk back across the field, and get over the stile; and then, in the very next field, she thought she remembered there was a hovel of furze near a sheepfold. If she could get into that hovel, she would be warmer; she could pass the night there, for that was what Alick did at Hayslope in lambing-time. The thought of this hovel brought the energy of a new hope: she took up her basket and walked across the field, but it was some time before she got in the right direction for the stile. The exercise and the occupation of finding the stile were a stimulus to her, however, and lightened the horror of the darkness and solitude. There were sheep in the next field, and she startled a group as she set down her basket and got over the stile; and the sound of their movement comforted her, for it assured her that her impression was right: this *was* the field where she had seen the hovel, for it was the field where the sheep were. Right on along the path, and she would get to it. She reached the opposite gate, and felt her way along its rails, and the rails of the sheepfold, till her hand encountered the pricking of the gorsy wall. Delicious sensation! She had found the shelter: she groped her way, touching the prickly gorse, to the door, and pushed it open. It was an ill-smelling close place, but warm, and there was straw on the ground: Hetty sank down on the straw with a sense of escape. Tears came — she had never shed tears before since she left Windsor — tears and sobs of hysterical joy that she had still hold of life, that she was still on the familiar earth, with the sheep near her. The very consciousness of her own limbs was a delight to her: she turned up her sleeves, and kissed her arms with the passionate love of life. Soon warmth and weariness lulled her in



the midst of her sobs, and she fell continually into dozing, fancying herself at the brink of the pool again — fancying that she had jumped into the water, and then awaking with a start, and wondering where she was. But at last deep dreamless sleep came; her head, guarded by her bonnet, found a pillow against the gorsy wall; and the poor soul, driven to and fro between two equal terrors, found the one relief that was possible to it — the relief of unconsciousness.

Alas! that relief seems to end the moment it has begun. It seemed to Hetty as if those dozen dreams had only passed into another dream — that she was in the hovel, and her aunt was standing over her with a candle in her hand. She trembled under her aunt's glance, and opened her eyes. There was no candle, but there was light in the hovel — the light of early morning through the open door. And there was a face looking down on her; but it was an unknown face, belonging to an elderly man in a smock-frock.

"Why, what do you do here, young woman?" the man said, roughly.

Hetty trembled still worse under this real fear and shame than she had done in her momentary dream under her aunt's glance. She felt that she was like a beggar already — found sleeping in that place. But in spite of her trembling, she was so eager to account to the man for her presence here, that she found words at once.

"I lost my way," she said. "I'm travelling — north'ard, and I got away from the road into the fields, and was overtaken by the dark. Will you tell me the way to the nearest village?"

She got up as she was speaking, and put her hands to her bonnet to adjust it, and then laid hold of her basket.

The man looked at her with a slow bovine gaze, without giving her any answer, for some seconds. Then he turned away and walked towards the door of the hovel, but it was not till he got there that he stood still, and, turning his shoulder half round towards her, said, —

"Aw, I can show you the way to Norton, if you like. But what do you do gettin' out o' the highroad?" he added, with a tone of gruff reproof. "You'll be gettin' into mischief, if you dooant mind."

"Yes," said Hetty, "I won't do it again. I'll keep in the road, if you'll be so good as show me how to get to it."

"Why dooant you keep where there's finger-poasses an' folks to ax the way on?" the man said, still more gruffly.

"Anybody 'ud think you was a wild woman, an' look at yer."

Hetty was frightened at this gruff old man, and still more at this last suggestion that she looked like a wild woman. As she followed him out of the hovel she thought she would give him a sixpence for telling her the way, and then he would not suppose she was wild. As he stopped to point out the road to her, she put her hand in her pocket to get the sixpence ready, and when he was turning away, without saying good-morning, she held it out to him and said, "Thank you; will you please to take something for your trouble?"

He looked slowly at the sixpence, and then said, "I want none o' your money. You'd better take care on't, else you'll get it stool from yer, if you go trapesin' about the fields like a mad woman a-that-way."

The man left her without further speech, and Hetty held on her way. Another day had risen, and she must wander on. It was no use to think of drowning herself—she could not do it, at least while she had money left to buy food, and strength to journey on. But the incident on her waking this morning heightened her dread of that time when her money would be all gone; she would have to sell her basket and clothes then, and she would really look like a beggar or a wild woman, as the man had said. The passionate joy in life she had felt in the night, after escaping from the brink of the black cold death in the pool, was gone now. Life now, by the morning light, with the impression of that man's hard wondering look at her, was as full of dread as death:—it was worse; it was a dread to which she felt chained, from which she shrank and shrank as she did from the black pool, and yet could find no refuge from it.

She took out her money from her purse, and looked at it; she had still two-and-twenty shillings; it would serve her for many days more, or it would help her to get on faster to Stonyshire, within reach of Dinah. The thought of Dinah urged itself more strongly now, since the experience of the night had driven her shuddering imagination away from the pool. If it had been only going to Dinah—if nobody besides Dinah would ever know—Hetty could have made up her mind to go to her. The soft voice, the pitying eyes, would have drawn her. But afterwards the other people must know, and she could no more rush on that shame than she could rush on death.

She must wander on and on, and wait for a lower depth of

despair to give her courage. Perhaps death would come to her, for she was getting less and less able to bear the day's weariness. And yet — such is the strange action of our souls, drawing us by a lurking desire towards the very ends we dread — Hetty, when she set out again from Norton, asked the straightest road northward towards Stonyshire, and kept it all that day.

Poor wandering Hetty, with the rounded childish face, and the hard unloving despairing soul looking out of it — with the narrow heart and narrow thoughts, no room in them for any sorrows but her own, and tasting that sorrow with the more intense bitterness! My heart bleeds for her as I see her toiling along on her weary feet, or seated in a cart, with her eyes fixed vacantly on the road before her, never thinking or caring whither it tends, till hunger comes and makes her desire that a village may be near.

What will be the end? — the end of her objectless wandering, apart from all love, caring for human beings only through her pride, clinging to life only as the hunted wounded brute clings to it?

God preserve you and me from being the beginners of such misery!

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE QUEST.

THE first ten days after Hetty's departure passed as quietly as any other days with the family at the Hall Farm, and with Adam at his daily work. They had expected Hetty to stay away a week or ten days at least, perhaps a little longer if Dinah came back with her, because there might then be something to detain them at Snowfield. But when a fortnight had passed they began to feel a little surprise that Hetty did not return; she must surely have found it pleasanter to be with Dinah than any one could have supposed. Adam, for his part, was getting very impatient to see her, and he resolved that, if she did not appear the next day (Saturday), he would set out on Sunday morning to fetch her. There was no coach on a Sunday; but by setting out before it was light, and perhaps getting a lift in a cart by the way, he would arrive pretty early at Snowfield, and bring back Hetty the

next day — Dinah too, if she were coming. It was quite time Hetty came home, and he would afford to lose his Monday for the sake of bringing her.

His project was quite approved at the Farm when he went there on Saturday evening. Mrs. Poyser desired him emphatically not to come back without Hetty, for she had been quite too long away, considering the things she had to get ready by the middle of March, and a week was surely enough for any one to go out for their health. As for Dinah, Mrs. Poyser had small hope of their bringing her, unless they could make her believe the folks at Hayslope were twice as miserable as the folks at Snowfield. "Though," said Mrs. Poyser, by way of conclusion, "you might tell her she's got but one aunt left, and *she's* wasted pretty nigh to a shadder; and we shall p'rhaps all be gone twenty mile further off her next Michaelmas, and shall die o' broken hearts among strange folks, and leave the children fatherless and motherless."

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Poyser, who certainly had the air of a man perfectly heart-whole, "it isna so bad as that. Thee'st looking rarely now, and getting flesh every day. But I'd be glad for Dinah t' come, for she'd help thee wi' the little uns: they took t' her wonderful."

So at daybreak, on Sunday, Adam set off. Seth went with him the first mile or two, for the thought of Snowfield, and the possibility that Dinah might come again, made him restless, and the walk with Adam in the cold morning air, both in their best clothes, helped to give him a sense of Sunday calm. It was the last morning in February, with a low gray sky, and a slight hoar-frost on the green border of the road and on the black hedges. They heard the gurgling of the full brooklet hurrying down the hill, and the faint twittering of the early birds. For they walked in silence, though with a pleased sense of companionship.

"Good-by, lad," said Adam, laying his hand on Seth's shoulder, and looking at him affectionately as they were about to part. "I wish thee wast going all the way wi' me, and as happy as I am."

"I'm content, Addy, I'm content," said Seth, cheerfully. "I'll be an old bachelor, belike, and make a fuss wi' thy children."

They turned away from each other, and Seth walked leisurely homeward, mentally repeating one of his favorite hymns — he was very fond of hymns:—

"Dark and cheerless is the morn  
Unaccompanied by thee :  
Joyless is the day's return  
Till thy mercy's beams I see :  
Till thou inward light impart,  
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

"Visit, then, this soul of mine,  
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief, —  
Fill me, Radiancy Divine,  
Scatter all my unbelief.  
More and more thyself display,  
Shining to the perfect day."

Adam walked much faster, and any one coming along the Oakbourne road at sunrise that morning must have had a pleasant sight in this tall broad-chested man, striding along with a carriage as upright and firm as any soldier's, glancing with keen glad eyes at the dark-blue hills as they began to show themselves on his way. Seldom in Adam's life had his face been so free from any cloud of anxiety as it was this morning; and this freedom from care, as is usual with constructive practical minds like his, made him all the more observant of the objects round him, and all the more ready to gather suggestions from them towards his own favorite plans and ingenious contrivances. His happy love — the knowledge that his steps were carrying him nearer and nearer to Hetty, who was so soon to be his — was to his thoughts what the sweet morning air was to his sensations: it gave him a consciousness of well-being that made activity delightful. Every now and then there was a rush of more intense feeling towards her, which chased away other images than Hetty; and along with that would come a wondering thankfulness that all this happiness was given to him — that this life of ours had such sweetness in it. For Adam had a devout mind, though he was perhaps rather impatient of devout words; and his tenderness lay very close to his reverence, so that the one could hardly be stirred without the other. But after feeling had welled up and poured itself out in this way, busy thought would come back with the greater vigor; and this morning it was intent on schemes by which the roads might be improved that were so imperfect all through the country, and on picturing all the benefits that might come from the exertions of a single country gentleman, if he would set himself to getting the roads made good in his own district.

It seemed a very short walk, the ten miles to Oakbourne,

that pretty town within sight of the blue hills, where he breakfasted. After this, the country grew barer and barer: no more rolling woods, no more wide-branching trees near frequent homesteads, no more bushy hedgerows; but gray stone walls intersecting the meagre pastures, and dismal wide-scattered gray-stone houses on broken lands where mines had been and were no longer. "A hungry land," said Adam to himself. "I'd rather go south'ard, where they say it's as flat as a table, than come to live here; though if Dinah likes to live in a country where she can be the most comfort to the folks, she's i' the right to live o' this side; for she must look as if she'd come straight from heaven, like th' angels in the desert, to strengthen them as ha' got nothing t' eat." And when at last he came in sight of Snowfield, he thought it looked like a town that was "fellow to the country," though the stream through the valley where the great mill stood gave a pleasant greenness to the lower fields. The town lay, grim, stony, and unsheltered, up the side of a steep hill, and Adam did not go forward to it at present, for Seth had told him where to find Dinah. It was at a thatched cottage outside the town, a little way from the mill — an old cottage, standing sideways towards the road, with a little bit of potato-ground before it. Here Dinah lodged with an elderly couple; and if she and Hetty happened to be out, Adam could learn where they were gone, or when they would be at home again. Dinah might be out on some preaching errand, and perhaps she would have left Hetty at home. Adam could not help hoping this, and as he recognized the cottage by the roadside before him, there shone out in his face that involuntary smile which belongs to the expectation of a near joy.

He hurried his step along the narrow causeway, and rapped at the door. It was opened by a very clean old woman, with a slow palsied shake of the head.

"Is Dinah Morris at home?" said Adam.

"Eh? . . . no," said the old woman, looking up at this tall stranger with a wonder that made her slower of speech than usual. "Will you please to come in?" she added, retiring from the door, as if recollecting herself. "Why, ye're brother to the young man as come afore, arena ye?"

"Yes," said Adam, entering. "That was Seth Bede. I'm his brother Adam. He told me to give his respects to you and your good master."

"Ay, the same t'him: he was a gracious young man. An' ye feature him, on'y ye're darker. Sit ye down i' th' arm-chair. My man isna come home from meeting."

Adam sat down patiently, not liking to hurry the shaking old woman with questions, but looking eagerly towards the narrow twisting stairs in one corner, for he thought it was possible Hetty might have heard his voice, and would come down then.

"So you're come to see Dinah Morris?" said the old woman, standing opposite to him. "An' you didna know she was away from home, then?"

"No," said Adam, "but I thought it likely she might be away, seeing as it's Sunday. But the other young woman — is she at home, or gone along with Dinah?"

The old woman looked at Adam with a bewildered air.

"Gone along wi' her?" she said. "Eh, Dinah's gone to Leeds, a big town ye may ha' heard on, where there's a many o' the Lord's people. She's been gone sin' Friday was a fortnight: they sent her the money for her journey. You may see her room here," she went on, opening a door, and not noticing the effect of her words on Adam. He rose and followed her, and darted an eager glance into the little room, with its narrow bed, the portrait of Wesley on the wall, and the few books lying on the large Bible. He had had an irrational hope that Hetty might be there. He could not speak in the first moment after seeing that the room was empty; an undefined fear had seized him — something had happened to Hetty on the journey. Still the old woman was so slow of speech and apprehension, that Hetty might be at Snowfield after all.

"It's a pity ye didna know," she said. "Have ye come from your own country o' purpose to see her?"

"But Hetty — Hetty Sorrel," said Adam, abruptly; "where is *she*?"

"I know nobody by that name," said the old woman wonderingly. "Is it anybody ye've heard on at Snowfield?"

"Did there come no young woman here — very young and pretty — Friday was a fortnight, to see Dinah Morris?"

"Nay; I'n seen no young woman."

"Think; are you quite sure? A girl, eighteen years old, with dark eyes and dark curly hair, and a red cloak on, and a basket on her arm? You couldn't forget her if you saw her."

"Nay; Friday was a fortnight — it was the day as Dinah went away; there come nobody. There's ne'er been nobody asking for her till you come, for the folks about know as she's gone. Eh dear, eh dear, is there summat the matter?"

The old woman had seen the ghastly look of fear in Adam's

face. But he was not stunned or confounded : he was thinking eagerly where he could inquire about Hetty.

"Yes; a young woman started from our country to see Dinah, Friday was a fortnight. I came to fetch her back. I'm afraid something has happened to her. I can't stop. Good-by."

He hastened out of the cottage, and the old woman followed him to the gate, watching him sadly with her shaking head, as he almost ran towards the town. He was going to inquire at the place where the Oakbourne coach stopped.

No! no young woman like Hetty had been seen there. Had any accident happened to the coach a fortnight ago? No. And there was no coach to take him back to Oakbourne that day. Well, he would walk: he couldn't stay here, in wretched inaction. But the innkeeper, seeing that Adam was in great anxiety, and entering into this new incident with the eagerness of a man who passes a great deal of time with his hands in his pockets looking into an obstinately monotonous street, offered to take him back to Oakbourne in his own "taxed cart" this very evening. It was not five o'clock; there was plenty of time for Adam to take a meal, and yet to get to Oakbourne before ten o'clock. The innkeeper declared that he really wanted to go to Oakbourne, and might as well go to-night; he should have all Monday before him then. Adam, after making an ineffectual attempt to eat, put the food in his pocket, and, drinking a draught of ale, declared himself ready to set off. As they approached the cottage, it occurred to him that he would do well to learn from the old woman where Dinah was to be found in Leeds: if there was trouble at the Hall Farm—he only half admitted the foreboding that there would be—the Poyzers might like to send for Dinah. But Dinah had not left any address, and the old woman, whose memory for names was infirm, could not recall the name of the "blessed woman" who was Dinah's chief friend in the Society at Leeds.

During that long, long journey in the taxed cart, there was time for all the conjectures of importunate fear and struggling hope. In the very first shock of discovering that Hetty had not been to Snowfield, the thought of Arthur had darted through Adam like a sharp pang: but he tried for some time to ward off its return by busying himself with modes of accounting for the alarming fact, quite apart from that intolerable thought. Some accident had happened. Hetty had, by some strange chance, got into a wrong vehicle from Oakbourne: she had been taken ill, and did not want to frighten them by



letting them know. But this frail fence of vague improbabilities was soon hurled down by a rush of distinct agonizing fears. Hetty had been deceiving herself in thinking that she could love and marry him: she had been loving Arthur all the while; and now, in her desperation at the nearness of their marriage, she had run away. And she was gone to *him*. The old indignation and jealousy rose again, and prompted the suspicion that Arthur had been dealing falsely — had written to Hetty — had tempted her to come to him — being unwilling, after all, that she should belong to another man besides himself. Perhaps the whole thing had been contrived by him, and he had given her directions how to follow him to Ireland: for Adam knew that Arthur had been gone thither three weeks ago, having recently learnt it at the Chase. Every sad look of Hetty's, since she had been engaged to Adam, returned upon him now with all the exaggeration of painful retrospect. He had been foolishly sanguine and confident. The poor thing hadn't perhaps known her own mind for a long while; had thought that she could forget Arthur; had been momentarily drawn towards the man who offered her a protecting, faithful love. He couldn't bear to blame her: she never meant to cause him this dreadful pain. The blame lay with that man who had selfishly played with her heart — had perhaps even deliberately lured her away.

At Oakbourne, the ostler at the Royal Oak remembered such a young woman as Adam described getting out of the Treddleston coach more than a fortnight ago — wasn't likely to forget such a pretty lass as that in a hurry — was sure she had not gone on by the Buxton coach that went through Snowfield, but had lost sight of her while he went away with the horses, and had never set eyes on her again. Adam then went straight to the house from which the Stoniton coach started: Stoniton was the most obvious place for Hetty to go to first, whatever might be her destination, for she would hardly venture on any but the chief coach-roads. She had been noticed here too, and was remembered to have sat on the box by the coachman; but the coachman could not be seen, for another man had been driving on that road in his stead the last three or four days: he could probably be seen at Stoniton, through inquiry at the inn where the coach put up. So the anxious heart-stricken Adam must of necessity wait and try to rest till morning — nay, till eleven o'clock, when the coach started.

At Stoniton another delay occurred, for the old coachman

who had driven Hetty would not be in the town again till night. When he did come he remembered Hetty well, and remembered his own joke addressed to her, quoting it many times to Adam, and observing with equal frequency that he thought there was something more than common, because Hetty had not laughed when he joked her. But he declared, as the people had done at the inn, that he had lost sight of Hetty directly she got down. Part of the next morning was consumed in inquiries at every house in the town from which a coach started — (all in vain; for you know Hetty did not start from Stoniton by coach, but on foot in the gray morning) — and then in walking out to the first toll-gates on the different lines of road, in the forlorn hope of finding some recollection of her there. No, she was not to be traced any farther; and the next hard task for Adam was to go home, and carry the wretched tidings to the Hall Farm. As to what he should do beyond that, he had come to two distinct resolutions amidst the tumult of thought and feeling which was going on within him while he went to and fro. He would not mention what he knew of Arthur Donnithorne's behavior to Hetty till there was a clear necessity for it: it was still possible Hetty might come back, and the disclosure might be an injury or an offence to her. And as soon as he had been home, and done what was necessary there to prepare for his further absence, he would start off to Ireland; if he found no trace of Hetty on the road, he would go straight to Arthur Donnithorne, and make himself certain how far he was acquainted with her movements. Several times the thought occurred to him that he would consult Mr. Irwine; but that would be useless unless he told him all, and so betrayed the secret about Arthur. It seems strange that Adam, in the incessant occupation of his mind about Hetty, should never have alighted on the probability that she had gone to Windsor, ignorant that Arthur was no longer there. Perhaps the reason was, that he could not conceive Hetty's throwing herself on Arthur uncalled; he imagined no cause that could have driven her to such a step, after that letter written in August. There were but two alternatives in his mind: either Arthur had written to her again and enticed her away, or she had simply fled from her approaching marriage with himself, because she found, after all, she could not love him well enough, and yet was afraid of her friends' anger if she retracted.

With this last determination on his mind, of going straight

to Arthur, the thought that he had spent two days in inquiries which had proved to be almost useless was torturing to Adam; and yet, since he would not tell the Poysers his conviction as to where Hetty was gone, or his intention to follow her thither, he must be able to say to them that he had traced her as far as possible.

It was after twelve o'clock on Tuesday night when Adam reached Treddleston; and, unwilling to disturb his mother and Seth, and also to encounter their questions at that hour, he threw himself without undressing on a bed at the "Wagon Overthrown," and slept hard from pure weariness. Not more than four hours, however; for before five o'clock he set out on his way home in the faint morning twilight. He always kept a key of the workshop door in his pocket, so that he could let himself in; and he wished to enter without awaking his mother, for he was anxious to avoid telling her the new trouble himself by seeing Seth first, and asking him to tell her when it should be necessary. He walked gently along the yard, and turned the key gently in the door; but, as he expected, Gyp, who lay in the workshop, gave a sharp bark. It subsided when he saw Adam, holding up his finger at him to impose silence; and in his dumb, tailless joy he must content himself with rubbing his body against his master's legs.

Adam was too heart-sick to take notice of Gyp's fondling. He threw himself on the bench, and stared dully at the wood and the signs of work around him, wondering if he should ever come to feel pleasure in them again; while Gyp, dimly aware that there was something wrong with his master, laid his rough gray head on Adam's knee, and wrinkled his brows to look up at him. Hitherto, since Sunday afternoon, Adam had been constantly among strange people and in strange places, having no associations with the details of his daily life; and now that by the light of this new morning he was come back to his home, and surrounded by the familiar objects that seemed forever robbed of their charm, the reality — the hard, inevitable reality — of his troubles pressed upon him with a new weight. Right before him was an unfinished chest of drawers, which he had been making in spare moments for Hetty's use, when his home should be hers.

Seth had not heard Adam's entrance, but he had been roused by Gyp's bark, and Adam heard him moving about in the room above, dressing himself. Seth's first thoughts were about his brother: he would come home to-day, surely, for

the business would be wanting him sadly by to-morrow, but it was pleasant to think he had had a longer holiday than he had expected. And would Dinah come too? Seth felt that that was the greatest happiness he could look forward to for himself, though he had no hope left that she would ever love him well enough to marry him; but he had often said to himself, it was better to be Dinah's friend and brother than any other woman's husband. If he could but be always near her, instead of living so far off!

He came down-stairs and opened the inner door leading from the kitchen into the workshop, intending to let out Gyp; but he stood still in the doorway, smitten with a sudden shock at the sight of Adam seated listlessly on the bench, pale, unwashed, with sunken blank eyes, almost like a drunkard in the morning. But Seth felt in an instant what the marks meant: not drunkenness, but some great calamity. Adam looked up at him without speaking, and Seth moved forward towards the bench, himself trembling so that speech did not come readily.

"God have mercy on us, Addy," he said, in a low voice, sitting down on the bench beside Adam, "what is it?"

Adam was unable to speak: the strong man, accustomed to suppress the signs of sorrow, had felt his heart swell like a child's at this first approach of sympathy. He fell on Seth's neck and sobbed.

Seth was prepared for the worst now, for, even in his recollections of their boyhood, Adam had never sobbed before.

"Is it death, Adam? Is she dead?" he asked, in a low tone, when Adam raised his head and was recovering himself.

"No, lad; but she's gone — gone away from us. She's never been to Snowfield. Dinah's been gone to Leeds ever since last Friday was a fortnight, the very day Hetty set out. I can't find out where she went after she got to Stoniton."

Seth was silent from utter astonishment: he knew nothing that could suggest to him a reason for Hetty's going away.

"Hast any notion what she's done it for?" he said, at last.

"She can't ha' loved me: she didn't like our marriage when it came nigh — that must be it," said Adam. He had determined to mention no further reason.

"I hear mother stirring," said Seth. "Must we tell her?"

"No, not yet," said Adam, rising from the bench, and pushing the hair from his face, as if he wanted to rouse himself. "I can't have her told yet; and I must set out on another journey directly, after I've been to the village and th' Hall

Farm. I can't tell thee where I'm going, and thee must say to her I'm gone on business as nobody is to know anything about. I'll go and wash myself now." Adam moved towards the door of the workshop, but after a step or two he turned round, and, meeting Seth's eyes with a calm sad glance, he said, "I must take all the money out o' the tin box, lad; but if anything happens to me, all the rest 'll be thine, to take care o' mother with."

Seth was pale and trembling: he felt there was some terrible secret under all this. "Brother," he said, faintly—he never called Adam "brother" except in solemn moments—"I don't believe you'll do anything as you can't ask God's blessing on."

"Nay, lad," said Adam, "don't be afraid. I'm for doing nought but what's a man's duty."

The thought that if he betrayed his trouble to his mother, she would only distress him by words, half of blundering affection, half of irrepressible triumph, that Hetty proved as unfit to be his wife as she had always foreseen, brought back some of his habitual firmness and self-command. He had felt ill on his journey home—he told her when she came down,—had stayed all night at Treddleston for that reason; and a bad headache, that still hung about him this morning, accounted for his paleness and heavy eyes.

He determined to go to the village, in the first place; attend to his business for an hour, and give notice to Burge of his being obliged to go on a journey, which he must beg him not to mention to any one; for he wished to avoid going to the Hall Farm near breakfast-time, when the children and servants would be in the house-place, and there must be exclamations in their hearing about his having returned without Hetty. He waited until the clock struck nine before he left the work-yard at the village, and set off, through the fields, towards the Farm. It was an immense relief to him, as he came near the Home Close, to see Mr. Poyser advancing towards him, for this would spare him the pain of going to the house. Mr. Poyser was walking briskly this March morning, with a sense of Spring business on his mind: he was going to cast the master's eye on the shoeing of a new cart-horse, carrying his spud as a useful companion by the way. His surprise was great when he caught sight of Adam, but he was not a man given to presentiments of evil.

"Why, Adam, lad, is't you? Have ye been all this time away, and not brought the lasses back, after all? Where are they?"

"No, I've not brought 'em," said Adam, turning round, to indicate that he wished to walk back with Mr. Poyser.

"Why," said Martin, looking with sharper attention at Adam, "ye look bad. Is there anything happened?"

"Yes," said Adam, heavily.. "A sad thing's happened. I didna find Hetty at Snowfield."

Mr. Poyser's good-natured face showed signs of troubled astonishment. "Not find her? What's happened to her?" he said, his thoughts flying at once to bodily accident.

"That I can't tell, whether anything's happened to her. She never went to Snowfield — she took the coach to Stoniton, but I can't learn nothing of her after she got down from the Stoniton coach."

"Why, you donna mean she's run away?" said Martin, standing still, so puzzled and bewildered that the fact did not yet make itself felt as a trouble by him.

"She must ha' done," said Adam. "She didn't like our marriage when it came to the point — that must be it. She'd mistook her feelings."

Martin was silent for a minute or two, looking on the ground, and rooting up the grass with his spud, without knowing what he was doing. His usual slowness was always trebled when the subject of speech was painful. At last he looked up, right in Adam's face, saying, —

"Then she didna deserve t' ha' ye, my lad. An' I feel i' fault myself, for she was my niece, and I was allays hot for her marr'ing ye. There's no amends I can make ye, lad — the more's the pity: it's a sad out-up for ye, I doubt."

Adam could say nothing; and Mr. Poyser, after pursuing his walk for a little while, went on: —

"I'll be bound she's gone after trying to get a lady's-maid's place, for she'd got that in her head half a year ago, and wanted me to gi' my consent. But I'd thought better on her," he added, shaking his head slowly and sadly — "I'd thought better on her, nor to look for this, after she'd gi'en y' her word, an' everything been got ready."

Adam had the strongest motives for encouraging this supposition in Mr. Poyser, and he even tried to believe that it might possibly be true. He had no warrant for the *certainly* that she was gone to Arthur.

"It was better it should be so," he said, as quietly as he could, "if she felt she couldn't like me for a husband. Better run away before than repent after. I hope you won't look harshly on her if she comes back, as she may do if she finds it hard to get on away from home."

"I canna look on her as I've done before," said Martin, decisively. "She's acted bad by yon, and by all of us. But I'll not turn my back on her: she's but a young un, and it's the first harm I've knowed on her. It'll be a hard job for me to tell her aunt. Why didna Dinah come back wi' ye? — she'd ha' helped to pacify her aunt a bit."

"Dinah wasn't at Snowfield. She's been gone to Leeds this fortnight; and I couldn't learn from th' old woman any direction where she is at Leeds, else I should ha' brought it you."

"She'd a deal better be staying wi' her own kin," said Mr. Poyser, indignantly, "than going preaching among strange folks a-that'n."

"I must leave you now, Mr. Poyser," said Adam, "for I've a deal to see to."

"Ay, you'd best be after your business, and I must tell the missis when I go home. It's a hard job."

"But," said Adam, "I beg particular, you'll keep what's happened quiet for a week or two. I've not told my mother yet, and there's no knowing how things may turn out."

"Ay, ay; least said, soonest mended. We'n no need to say why the match is broke off, an' we may hear of her after a bit. Shake hands wi' me, lad: I wish I could make thee amends."

There was something in Martin Poyser's throat at that moment which caused him to bring out those scanty words in rather a broken fashion. Yet Adam knew what they meant all the better; and the two honest men grasped each other's hard hands in mutual understanding.

There was nothing now to hinder Adam from setting off. He had told Seth to go to the Chase, and leave a message for the Squire, saying that Adam Bede had been obliged to start off suddenly on a journey, — and to say as much, and no more, to any one else who made inquiries about him. If the Poyser's learned that he was gone away again, Adam knew they would infer that he was gone in search of Hetty.

He had intended to go right on his way from the Hall Farm; but now the impulse which had frequently visited him before — to go to Mr. Irwine, and make a confidant of him — recurred with the new force which belongs to a last opportunity. He was about to start on a long journey — a difficult one — by sea — and no soul would know where he was gone. If anything happened to him? or, if he absolutely needed help in any matter concerning Hetty? Mr. Irwine was to be trusted; and the feeling which made Adam shrink from

telling anything which was *her* secret, must give way before the need there was that she should have some one else besides himself, who would be prepared to defend her in the worst extremity. Towards Arthur, even though he might have incurred no new guilt, Adam felt that he was not bound to keep silence when Hetty's interest called on him to speak.

"I must do it," said Adam, when these thoughts, which had spread themselves through hours of his sad journeying, now rushed upon him in an instant, like a wave that had been slowly gathering; "it's the right thing. I can't stand alone in this way any longer."

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## THE TIDINGS.

ADAM turned his face towards Broxton and walked with his swiftest stride, looking at his watch with the fear that Mr. Irwine might be gone out—hunting, perhaps. The fear and haste together produced a state of strong excitement before he reached the Rectory gate; and outside it he saw the deep marks of a recent hoof on the gravel.

But the hoofs were turned towards the gate, not away from it; and though there was a horse against the stable door, it was not Mr. Irwine's: it had evidently had a journey this morning, and must belong to some one who had come on business. Mr. Irwine was at home, then; but Adam could hardly find breath and calmness to tell Carroll that he wanted to speak to the Rector. The double suffering of certain and uncertain sorrow had begun to shake the strong man. The butler looked at him wonderingly, as he threw himself on a bench in the passage and stared absently at the clock on the opposite wall: the master had somebody with him, he said, but he heard the study door open—the stranger seemed to be coming out, and as Adam was in a hurry, he would let the master know at once.

Adam sat looking at the clock: the minute-hand was hurrying along the last five minutes to ten, with a loud hard indifferent tick, and Adam watched the movement and listened to the sound as if he had had some reason for doing so. In our times of bitter suffering, there are almost always these pauses, when our consciousness is benumbed to everything but some trivial



perception or sensation. It is as if semi-idioty came to give us rest from the memory and the dread which refuse to leave us in our sleep.

Carroll, coming back, recalled Adam to the sense of his burden. He was to go into the study immediately. "I can't think what that strange person's come about," the butler added, from mere incontinence of remark, as he preceded Adam to the door, "he's gone i' the dining-room. And master looks unaccountable—as if he was frightened." Adam took no notice of the words: he could not care about other people's business. But when he entered the study and looked in Mr. Irwine's face, he felt in an instant that there was a new expression in it, strangely different from the warm friendliness it had always worn for him before. A letter lay open on the table, and Mr. Irwine's hand was on it; but the changed glance he cast on Adam could not be owing entirely to preoccupation with some disagreeable business, for he was looking eagerly towards the door, as if Adam's entrance were a matter of poignant anxiety to him.

"You want to speak to me, Adam," he said, in that low constrained quiet tone which a man uses when he is determined to suppress agitation. "Sit down here." He pointed to a chair just opposite to him, at no more than a yard's distance from his own, and Adam sat down with a sense that this cold manner of Mr. Irwine's gave an additional unexpected difficulty to his disclosure. But when Adam had made up his mind to a measure, he was not the man to renounce it for any but imperative reasons.

"I come to you, sir," he said, "as the gentleman I look up to most of anybody. I've something very painful to tell you—something as it'll pain you to hear as well as me to tell. But if I speak o' the wrong other people have done, you'll see I didn't speak till I'd good reason."

Mr. Irwine nodded slowly, and Adam went on rather tremulously,—

"You was t' ha' married me and Hetty Sorrel, you know, sir, o' the fifteenth o' this month. I thought she loved me, and I was th' happiest man i' the parish. But a dreadful blow's come upon me."

Mr. Irwine started up from his chair, as if involuntarily, but then, determined to control himself, walked to the window and looked out,

"She's gone away, sir, and we don't know where. She said she was going to Snowfield o' Friday was a fortnight, and I

went last Sunday to fetch her back ; but she'd never been there, and she took the coach to Stoniton, and beyond that I can't trace her. But now I'm going a long journey to look for her, and I can't trust t' anybody but you where I'm going."

Mr. Irwine came back from the window and sat down.

"Have you no idea of the reason why she went away?" he said.

"It's plain enough she didn't want to marry me, sir," said Adam. "She didn't like it when it came so near. But that isn't all, I doubt. There's something else I must tell you, sir. There's somebody else concerned besides me."

A gleam of something — it was almost like relief or joy — came across the eager anxiety of Mr. Irwine's face at that moment. Adam was looking on the ground, and paused a little: the next words were hard to speak. But when he went on, he lifted up his head and looked straight at Mr. Irwine. He would do the thing he had resolved to do, without flinching.

"You know who's the man I've reckoned my greatest friend," he said, "and used to be proud to think as I should pass my life i' working for him, and had felt so ever since we were lads." . . .

Mr. Irwine, as if all self-control had forsaken him, grasped Adam's arm, which lay on the table, and, clutching it tightly like a man in pain, said, with pale lips and a low hurried voice,—

"No, Adam, no — don't say it, for God's sake!"

Adam, surprised at the violence of Mr. Irwine's feeling, repented of the words that had passed his lips, and sat in distressed silence. The grasp on his arm gradually relaxed, and Mr. Irwine throw himself back in his chair, saying, "Go on — I must know it."

"That man played with Hetty's feelings, and behaved to her as he'd no right to do to a girl in her station o' life — made her presents, and used to go and meet her out-a-walking: I found it out only two days before he went away — found him a-kissing her as they were parting in the Grove. There'd been nothing said between me and Hetty then, though I'd loved her for a long while, and she knew it. But I reproached him with his wrong actions, and words and blows passed between us; and he said solemnly to me, after that, as it had been all nonsense, and no more than a bit o' flirting. But I made him write a letter to tell Hetty he'd meant nothing; for I saw clear enough, sir, by several things as I hadn't understood at the time, as he'd got hold of her heart, and I thought

she'd belike go on thinking of him, and never come to love another man as wanted to marry her. And I gave her the letter, and she seemed to bear it all after a while better than I'd expected . . . and she behaved kinder and kinder to me . . . I dare say she didn't know her own feelings then, poor thing, and they came back upon her when it was too late . . . I don't want to blame her . . . I can't think as she meant to deceive me. But I was encouraged to think she loved me, and — you know the rest, sir. But it's on my mind as he's been false to me, and 'ticed her away, and she's gone to him — and I'm going now to see; for I can never go to work again till I know what's become of her."

During Adam's narrative, Mr. Irwine had had time to recover his self-mastery in spite of the painful thoughts that crowded upon him. It was a bitter remembrance to him now — that morning when Arthur breakfasted with him, and seemed as if he were on the verge of a confession. It was plain enough *now* what he had wanted to confess. And if their words had taken another turn . . . if he himself had been less fastidious about intruding on another man's secrets . . . it was cruel to think how thin a film had shut out rescue from all this guilt and misery. He saw the whole history now by that terrible illumination which the present sheds back upon the past. But every other feeling as it rushed upon him was thrown into abeyance by pity, deep respectful pity, for the man who sat before him, — already so bruised, going forth with sad blind resignedness to an unreal sorrow, while a real one was close upon him, too far beyond the range of common trial for him ever to have feared it. His own agitation was quelled by a certain awe that comes over us in the presence of a great anguish; for the anguish he must inflict on Adam was already present to him. Again he put his hand on the arm that lay on the table, but very gently this time, as he said solemnly, —

"Adam, my dear friend, you have had some hard trials in your life. You can bear sorrow manfully, as well as act manfully: God requires both tasks at our hands. And there is a heavier sorrow coming upon you than any you have yet known. But you are not guilty — you have not the worst of all sorrows. God help him who has!"

The two pale faces looked at each other; in Adam's there was trembling suspense, in Mr. Irwine's hesitating, shrinking pity. But he went on.

"I have had news of Hetty this morning. She is not gone to *him*. She is in Stonyshire — at Stoniton."

Adam started up from his chair, as if he thought he could have leaped to her that moment. But Mr. Irwine laid hold of his arm again, and said, persuasively, "Wait, Adam, wait." So he sat down.

"She is in a very unhappy position—one which will make it worse for you to find her, my poor friend, than to have lost her forever."

Adam's lips moved tremulously, but no sound came. They moved again, and he whispered, "Tell me."

"She has been arrested . . . she is in prison."

It was as if an insulting blow had brought back the spirit of resistance into Adam. The blood rushed to his face, and he said, loudly and sharply —

"For what?"

"For a great crime — the murder of her child."

"It *can't* be!" Adam almost shouted, starting up from his chair, and making a stride towards the door; but he turned round again, setting his back against the book-case, and looking fiercely at Mr. Irwine. "It isn't possible. She never had a child. She can't be guilty. *Who* says it?"

"God grant she may be innocent, Adam. We can still hope she is."

"But who says she is guilty?" said Adam, violently. "Tell me everything."

"Here is a letter from the magistrate before whom she was taken, and the constable who arrested her is in the dining-room. She will not confess her name or where she comes from; but I fear, I fear, there can be no doubt it is Hetty. The description of her person corresponds, only that she is said to look very pale and ill. She had a small red-leather pocket-book in her pocket with two names written in it—one at the beginning, 'Hetty Sorrel, Hayslope,' and the other near the end, 'Dinah Morris, Snowfield.' She will not say which is her own name—she denies everything, and will answer no questions; and application has been made to me, as a magistrate, that I may take measures for identifying her, for it was thought probable that the name which stands first is her own name."

"But what proof have they got against her, if it is Hetty?" said Adam, still violently, with an effort that seemed to shake his whole frame. "I'll not believe it. It couldn't ha' been, and none of us know it."

"Terrible proof that she was under the temptation to commit the crime; but we have room to hope that she did not really commit it. Try and read that letter, Adam."

Adam took the letter between his shaking hands, and tried to fix his eyes steadily on it. Mr. Irwine meanwhile went out to give some orders. When he came back, Adam's eyes were still on the first page—he couldn't read—he could not put the words together, and make out what they meant. He threw it down at last, and clinched his fist.

"It's *his* doing," he said; "if there's been any orime, it's at his door, not at hers. *He* taught her to deceive—he deceived me first. Let 'em put *him* on his trial—let him stand in court beside her, and I'll tell 'em how he got hold of her heart, and 'ticed her t' evil, and then lied to me. Is *he* to go free, while they lay all the punishment on her . . . so weak and young?"

The image called up by these last words gave a new direction to poor Adam's maddened feelings. He was silent, looking at the corner of the room as if he saw something there. Then he burst out again, in a tone of appealing anguish,—

"I *can't* bear it . . . O God, it's too hard to lay upon me—it's too hard to think she's wicked."

Mr. Irwine had sat down again in silence: he was too wise to utter soothing words at present, and indeed the sight of Adam before him, with that look of sudden age which sometimes comes over a young face in moments of terrible emotion—the hard bloodless look of the skin, the deep lines about the quivering mouth, the furrows in the brow—the sight of this strong firm man shattered by the invisible stroke of sorrow, moved him so deeply that speech was not easy. Adam stood motionless, with his eyes vacantly fixed in this way for a minute or two; in that short space he was living through all his love again.

"She can't ha' done it," he said, still without moving his eyes, as if he were only talking to himself: "it was fear made her hide it . . . I forgive her for deceiving me . . . I forgive thee, Hetty . . . thee wast deceived too . . . it's gone hard wi' thee, my poor Hetty . . . but they'll never make me believe it."

He was silent again for a few moments, and then he said, with fierce abruptness,—

"I'll go to him—I'll bring him back—I'll make him go and look at her in her misery—he shall look at her till he can't forget it—it shall follow him night and day—as long as he lives it shall follow him—he sha'n't escape wi' lies this time—I'll fetch him, I'll drag him myself."

In the act of going towards the door, Adam paused automatically and looked about for his hat, quite unconscious where he was, or who was present with him. Mr. Irwine had followed him, and now took him by the arm, saying, in a quiet but decided tone, —

"No, Adam, no; I'm sure you will wish to stay and see what good can be done for *her*, instead of going on a useless errand of vengeance. The punishment will surely fall without your aid. Besides, he is no longer in Ireland: he must be on his way home—or would be, long before you arrived; for his grandfather, I know, wrote for him to come at least ten days ago. I want you now to go with me to Stoniton. I have ordered a horse for you to ride with us, as soon as you can compose yourself."

While Mr. Irwine was speaking, Adam recovered his consciousness of the actual scene: he rubbed his hair off his forehead and listened.

"Remember," Mr. Irwine went on, "there are others to think of, and act for, besides yourself, Adam: there are Hetty's friends, the good Poyzers, on whom this stroke will fall more heavily than I can bear to think. I expect it from your strength of mind, Adam—from your sense of duty to God and man—that you will try to act as long as action can be of any use."

In reality, Mr. Irwine proposed this journey to Stoniton for Adam's own sake. Movement, with some object before him, was the best means of counteracting the violence of suffering in these first hours.

"You *will* go with me to Stoniton, Adam?" he said again, after a moment's pause. "We have to see if it is really Hetty who is there, you know."

"Yes, sir," said Adam, "I'll do what you think right. But the folks at th' Hall Farm?"

"I wish them not to know till I return to tell them myself. I shall have ascertained things then which I am uncertain about now, and I shall return as soon as possible. Come now, the horses are ready."

## CHAPTER XL.

## THE BITTER WATERS SPREAD.

MR. IRWINE returned from Stoniton in a post-chaise that night, and the first words Carroll said to him, as he entered the house, were, that Squire Donnithorne was dead — found dead in his bed at ten o'clock that morning — and that Mrs. Irwine desired him to say she should be awake when Mr. Irwine came home, and she begged him not to go to bed without seeing her.

"Well, Dauphin," Mrs. Irwine said, as her son entered her room, "you're come at last. So the old gentleman's fidgetiness and low spirits, which made him send for Arthur in that sudden way, really meant something. I suppose Carroll has told you that Donnithorne was found dead in his bed this morning. You will believe my prognostications another time, though I dare say I sha'n't live to prognosticate anything but my own death."

"What have they done about Arthur?" said Mr. Irwine. "Sent a messenger to await him at Liverpool?"

"Yes, Ralph was gone before the news was brought to us. Dear Arthur, I shall live now to see him master at the Chase, and making good times on the estate, like a generous-hearted fellow as he is. He'll be as happy as a king now."

Mr. Irwine could not help giving a slight groan: he was worn with anxiety and exertion, and his mother's light words were almost intolerable.

"What are you so dismal about, Dauphin? Is there any bad news? Or are you thinking of the danger for Arthur in crossing that frightful Irish Channel at this time of year?"

"No, mother, I'm not thinking of that; but I'm not prepared to rejoice just now."

"You've been worried by this law business that you've been to Stoniton about. What in the world is it, that you can't tell me?"

"You will know by and by, mother. It would not be right for me to tell you at present. Good-night: you'll sleep now you have no longer anything to listen for."

Mr. Irwine gave up his intention of sending a letter to meet Arthur, since it would not now hasten his return: the news of his grandfather's death would bring him as soon as he could possibly come. He could go to bed now and get some needful rest, before the time came for the morning's heavy duty of carrying his sickening news to the Hall Farm and to Adam's home.

Adam himself was not come back from Stoniton, for though he shrank from seeing Hetty, he could not bear to go to a distance from her again.

"It's no use, sir," he said to the Rector — "it's no use for me to go back. I can't go to work again while she's here; and I couldn't bear the sight o' the things and folks round home. I'll take a bit of a room here, where I can see the prison walls, and perhaps I shall get, in time, to bear seeing *her*."

Adam had not been shaken in his belief that Hetty was innocent of the crime she was charged with, for Mr. Irwine, feeling that the belief in her guilt would be a crushing addition to Adam's load, had kept from him the facts which left no hope in his own mind. There was not any reason for thrusting the whole burthen on Adam at once, and Mr. Irwine, at parting, only said, "If the evidence should tell too strongly against her, Adam, we may still hope for a pardon. Her youth and other circumstances will be a plea for her."

"Ah, and it's right people should know how she was tempted into the wrong way," said Adam, with bitter earnestness. "It's right they should know it was a fine gentleman made love to her, and turned her head w' notions. You'll remember, sir, you've promised to tell my mother, and Seth, and the people at the Farm, who it was as led her wrong, else they'll think harder of her than she deserves. You'll be doing her a hurt by sparing him, and I hold him the guiltiest before God, let her a' done what she may. If you spare him, I'll expose him!"

"I think your demand is just, Adam," said Mr. Irwine, "but when you are calmer, you will judge Arthur more mercifully. I say nothing now, only that his punishment is in other hands than ours."

Mr. Irwine felt it hard upon him that he should have to tell of Arthur's sad part in the story of sin and sorrow — he who cared for Arthur with fatherly affection — who had cared for him with fatherly pride. But he saw clearly that the secret must be known before long, even apart from Adam's



determination, since it was scarcely to be supposed that Hetty would persist to the end in her obstinate silence. He made up his mind to withhold nothing from the Poyzers, but to tell them the worst at once, for there was no time to rob the tidings of their suddenness. Hetty's trial must come on at the Lent assizes, and they were to be held at Stoniton the next week. It was scarcely to be hoped that Martin Poyser could escape the pain of being called as a witness, and it was better he should know everything as long beforehand as possible.

Before ten o'clock on Thursday morning the home at the Hall Farm was a house of mourning for a misfortune felt to be worse than death. The sense of family dishonor was too keen even in the kind-hearted Martin Poyser the younger, to leave room for any compassion towards Hetty. He and his father were simple-minded farmers, proud of their untarnished character, proud that they came of a family which had held up its head and paid its way as far back as its name was in the parish register; and Hetty had brought disgrace on them all — disgrace that could never be wiped out. That was the all-conquering feeling in the mind both of father and son — the scorching sense of disgrace, which neutralized all other sensibility; and Mr. Irwine was struck with surprise to observe that Mrs. Poyser was less severe than her husband. We are often startled by the severity of mild people on exceptional occasions; the reason is, that mild people are most liable to be under the yoke of traditional impressions.

"I'm willing to pay any money as is wanted towards trying to bring her off," said Martin the younger when Mr. Irwine was gone, while the old grandfather was crying in the opposite chair, "but I'll not go nigh her, nor ever see her again, by my own will. She's made our bread bitter to us for all our lives to come, an' we shall ne'er hold up our heads i' this parish nor i' any other. The parson talks o' folks pitying us: it's poor amends pity 'ull make us."

"Pity?" said the grandfather, sharply. "I ne'er wanted folks's pity i' *my* life afore . . . an' I mun begin to be looked down on now, an' me turned seventy-two last St. Thomas's, an' all th' under-bearers and pall-bearers as I'n picked for my funeral are i' this parish and the next to 't. . . . It's o' uo use now . . . I mun be ta'en to the grave by strangers."

"Don't fret so, father," said Mrs. Poyser, who had spoken very little, being almost overawed by her husband's unusual hardness and decision. "You'll have your children wi' you;

an' there's the lads and the little un 'ull grow up in a new parish as well as i' th' old un."

"Ah, there's no staying i' this country for us now," said Mr. Poyser, and the hard tears trickled slowly down his round cheeks. "We thought it 'ud be bad luck if the old Squire gave us notice this Lady Day, but I must gi' notice myself now, an' see if there can anybody be got to come an' take to the crops as I'n put i' the ground; for I wouna stay upo' that man's land a day longer nor I'n forced to't. An' me, as thought him such a good upright young man, as I should be glad when he come to be our landlord. I'll ne'er lift my hat to him again, nor sit i' the same church wi' him . . . a man as has brought shame on respectable folks . . . an' pretended to be such a friend t' everybody. . . . Poor Adam there . . . a fine friend he's been t' Adam, making speeches an' talking so fine, an' all the while poisoning the lad's life, as it's much if he can stay i' this country any more nor we can."

"An' you t' ha' to go into court, and own you're akin t' her," said the old man. "Why, they'll cast it up to the little un, as isn't four 'ear old, some day — they'll cast it up t' her as she'd a cousin tried at the 'sizes for murder."

"It'll be their own wickedness, then," said Mrs. Poyser, with a sob in her voice. "But there's One above 'ull take care o' the innicent child, else it's but little truth they tell us at church. It'll be harder nor ever to die an' leave the little uns, an' nobody to be a mother to 'em."

"We'd better ha' sent for Dinah, if we'd known where she is," said Mr. Poyser; "but Adam said she'd left no direction where she'd be at Leeds."

"Why, she'd be wi' that woman as was a friend t' her aunt Judith," said Mrs. Poyser, comforted a little by this suggestion of her husband's. "I've often heard Dinah talk of her, but I can't remember what name she called her by. But there's Seth Bede; he's like enough to know, for she's a preaching woman as the Methodists think a deal on."

"I'll send to Seth," said Mr. Poyser. "I'll send Alick to tell him to come, or else to send us word o' the woman's name, an' thee canst write a letter ready to send off to Tred-dles'on as soon as we can make out a direction."

"It's poor work writing letters when you want folks to come to you i' trouble," said Mrs. Poyser. "Happen it'll be ever so long on the road, an' never reach her at last."

Before Alick arrived with the message, Lisbeth's thoughts too had already flown to Dinah, and she had said to Seth, —

"Eh, there's no comfort for us i' this world any more, wi'out thee couldst get Dinah Morris to come to us, as she did when my old man died. I'd like her to come in an' take me by th' hand again, an' talk to me: she'd tell me the rights on't, belike — she'd happen know some good i' all this trouble an' heart-break comin' upo' that poor lad, as ne'er done a bit o' wrong in's life, but war better nor anybody else's son, pick the country round. Eh, my lad . . . Adam, my poor lad!"

"Thee wouldstna like me to leave thee, to go and fetch Dinah?" said Seth, as his mother sobbed, and rocked herself to and fro.

"Fetch her?" said Lisbeth, looking up, and pausing from her grief, like a crying child, who hears some promise of consolation. "Why, what place is't she's at, do they say?"

"It's a good way off, mother — Leeds, a big town. But I could be back in three days, if thee couldst spare me."

"Nay, nay, I canna spare thee. Thee must go an' see thy brother, an' bring me word what he's a-doin'. Mester Irwine said he'd come an' tell me, but I canna make out so well what it means when he tells me. Thee must go thysep, sin' Adam wonna let me go to him. Write a letter to Dinah, oanstna? Thee't fond enough o' writin, when nobody wants thee."

"I'm not sure where she be i' that big town," said Seth. "If I'd gone myself, I could ha' found out by asking the members o' the Society. But perhaps, if I put Sarah Williamson, Methodist preacher, Leeds, o' th' outside, it might get to her; for most like she'd be wi' Sarah Williamson."

Alick came now with the message, and Seth, finding that Mrs. Poyser was writing to Dinah, gave up the intention of writing himself; but he went to the Hall Farm to tell them all he could suggest about the address of the letter, and warn them that there might be some delay in the delivery, from his not knowing an exact direction.

On leaving Lisbeth, Mr. Irwine had gone to Jonathan Burge, who had also a claim to be acquainted with what was likely to keep Adam away from business for some time; and before six o'clock that evening there were few people in Broxton and Hayslope who had not heard the sad news. Mr. Irwine had not mentioned Arthur's name to Burge, and yet the story of his conduct towards Hetty, with all the dark shadows cast upon it by its terrible consequences, was presently as well known as that his grandfather was dead, and that he

was come into the estate. For Martin Poyser felt no motive to keep silence towards the one or two neighbors who ventured to come and shake him sorrowfully by the hand on the first day of his trouble; and Carroll, who kept his ears open to all that passed at the Rectory, had framed an inferential version of the story, and found early opportunities of communicating it.

One of those neighbors who came to Martin Poyser and shook him by the hand without speaking for some minutes, was Bartle Massey. He had shut up his school, and was on his way to the Rectory, where he arrived about half-past seven in the evening, and, sending his duty to Mr. Irwine, begged pardon for troubling him at that hour, but had something particular on his mind. He was shown into the study, where Mr. Irwine soon joined him.

"Well, Bartle?" said Mr. Irwine, putting out his hand. That was not his usual way of saluting the schoolmaster, but trouble makes us treat all who feel with us very much alike. "Sit down."

"You know what I'm come about as well as I do, sir, I dare say," said Bartle.

"You wish to know the truth about the sad news that has reached you . . . about Hetty Sorrel?"

"Nay, sir, what I wish to know is about Adam Bede. I understand you left him at Stoniton, and I beg the favor of you to tell me what's the state of the poor lad's mind, and what he means to do. For as for that bit o' pink-and-white they've taken the trouble to put in jail, I don't value her a rotten nut—not a rotten nut—only for the harm or good that may come out of her to an honest man—a lad I've set such store by—trusted too, that he'd make my bit o' knowledge go a good way in the world. . . . Why, sir, he's the only scholar I've had in this stupid country that ever had the will or the headpiece for mathematics. If he hadn't had so much hard work to do, poor fellow, he might have gone into the higher branches, and then this might never have happened—might never have happened."

Bartle was heated by the exertion of walking fast in an agitated frame of mind, and was not able to check himself on this first occasion of venting his feelings. But he paused now to rub his moist forehead, and probably his moist eyes also.

"You'll excuse me, sir," he said, when this pause had given him time to reflect, "for running on in this way about my own feelings, like that foolish dog of mine, howling in a storm,

when there's nobody wants to listen to me. I came to hear you speak, not to talk myself; if you'll take the trouble to tell me what the poor lad's doing."

"Don't put yourself under any restraint, Bartle," said Mr. Irwine. "The fact is, I'm very much in the same condition as you just now; I've a great deal that's painful on my mind, and I find it hard work to be quite silent about my own feelings and only attend to others. I share your concern for Adam, though he is not the only one whose sufferings I care for in this affair. He intends to remain at Stoniton till after the trial: it will come on probably a week to-morrow. He has taken a room there, and I encouraged him to do so, because I think it better he should be away from his own home at present; and, poor fellow, he still believes Hetty is innocent—he wants to summon up courage to see her if he can; he is unwilling to leave the spot where she is."

"Do you think the creatur's guilty, then?" said Bartle. "Do you think they'll hang her?"

"I'm afraid it will go hard with her: the evidence is very strong. And one bad symptom is that she denies everything—denies that she has had a child in the face of the most positive evidence. I saw her myself, and she was obstinately silent to me; she shrank up like a frightened animal when she saw me. I was never so shocked in my life as at the change in her. But I trust that, in the worst case, we may obtain a pardon for the sake of the innocent who are involved."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Bartle, forgetting in his irritation to whom he was speaking—"I beg your pardon, sir, I mean it's stuff and nonsense for the innocent to care about her being hanged. For my own part, I think the sooner such women are put out o' the world the better; and the men that help 'em to do mischief had better go along with 'em for that matter. What good will you do by keeping such vermin alive? eating the victual that 'ud feed rational beings. But if Adam's fool enough to care about it, I don't want him to suffer more than's needful. . . . Is he very much cut up, poor fellow?" Bartle added, taking out his spectacles and putting them on, as if they would assist his imagination.

"Yes, I'm afraid the grief cuts very deep," said Mr Irwine. "He looks terribly shattered, and a certain violence came over him now and then yesterday, which made me wish I could have remained near him. But I shall go to Stoniton again to-morrow, and I have confidence enough in the strength of Adam's principle to trust that he will be able to endure the worst without being driven to anything rash."

Mr. Irwine, who was involuntarily uttering his own thoughts rather than addressing Bartle Massey in the last sentence, had in his mind the possibility that the spirit of vengeance towards Arthur, which was the form Adam's anguish was continually taking, might make him seek an encounter that was likely to end more fatally than the one in the Grove. This possibility heightened the anxiety with which he looked forward to Arthur's arrival. But Bartle thought Mr. Irwine was referring to suicide, and his face wore a new alarm.

"I'll tell you what I have in my head, sir," he said, "and I hope you'll approve of it. I'm going to shut up my school; if the scholars come, they must go back again, that's all: and I shall go to Stoniton and look after Adam till this business is over. I'll pretend I'm come to look on at the assizes; he can't object to that. What do you think about it, sir?"

"Well," said Mr. Irwine, rather hesitatingly, "there would be some real advantages in that . . . and I honor you for your friendship towards him, Bartle. But . . . you must be careful what you say to him, you know. I'm afraid you have too little fellow-feeling in what you consider his weakness about Hetty."

"Trust to me, sir—trust to me. I know what you mean. I've been a fool myself in my time, but that's between you and me. I sha'n't thrust myself on him—only keep my eye on him, and see that he gets some good food, and put in a word here and there."

"Then," said Mr. Irwine, reassured a little as to Bartle's discretion, "I think you'll be doing a good deed; and it will be well for you to let Adam's mother and brother know that you're going."

"Yes, sir, yes," said Bartle, rising, and taking off his spectacles, "I'll do that, I'll do that; though the mother's a whimpering thing—I don't like to come within earshot of her; however, she's a straight-backed, clean woman, none of your slatterns. I wish you good-by, sir, and thank you for the time you've spared me. You're everybody's friend in this business—everybody's friend. It's a heavy weight you've got on your shoulders."

"Good-by, Bartle, till we meet at Stoniton, as I dare say we shall."

Bartle hurried away from the Rectory, evading Carroll's conversational advances, and saying in an exasperated tone to Vixen, whose short legs pattered beside him on the gravel,—

"Now, I shall be obliged to take you with me, you good-for-

nothing woman. You'd go fretting yourself to death if I left you — you know you would, and perhaps get snapped up by some tramp; and you'll be running into bad company, I expect, putting your nose in every hole and corner where you've no business! but if you do anything disgraceful, I'll disown you — mind that, madam, mind that!"

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## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE EVE OF THE TRIAL.

AN upper room in a dull Stoniton street, with two beds in it — one laid on the floor. It is ten o'clock on Thursday night, and the dark wall opposite the window shuts out the moonlight that might have struggled with the light of the one dip candle by which Bartle Massey is pretending to read, while he is really looking over his spectacles at Adam Bede, seated near the dark window.

You would hardly have known it was Adam without being told. His face has got thinner this last week: he has the sunken eyes, the neglected beard of a man just risen from a sick-bed. His heavy black hair hangs over his forehead, and there is no active impulse in him which inclines him to push it off, that he may be more awake to what is around him. He has one arm over the back of the chair, and he seems to be looking down at his clasped hands. He is roused by a knock at the door.

"There he is," said Bartle Massey, rising hastily and unfastening the door. It was Mr. Irwine.

Adam rose from his chair with instinctive respect, as Mr. Irwine approached him and took his hand.

"I'm late, Adam," he said, sitting down on the chair which Bartle placed for him; "but I was later in setting off from Broxton than I intended to be, and I have been incessantly occupied since I arrived. I have done everything now, however — everything that can be done to-night, at least. Let us all sit down."

Adam took his chair again mechanically, and Bartle, for whom there was no chair remaining, sat on the bed in the background.

"Have you seen her, sir?" said Adam, tremulously.

"Yes, Adam; I and the chaplain have both been with her this evening."

"Did you ask her, sir . . . did you say anything about me?"

"Yes," said Mr. Irwine, with some hesitation, "I spoke of you. I said you wished to see her before the trial, if she consented."

As Mr. Irwine paused, Adam looked at him with eager, questioning eyes.

"You know she shrinks from seeing any one, Adam. It is not only you — some fatal influence seems to have shut up her heart against her fellow-creatures. She has scarcely said anything more than 'No,' either to me or the chaplain. Three or four days ago, before you were mentioned to her, when I asked her if there was any one of her family whom she would like to see — to whom she could open her mind, she said, with a violent shudder, 'Tell them not to come near me — I won't see any of them.'"

Adam's head was hanging down again, and he did not speak. There was silence for a few minutes, and then Mr. Irwine said, —

"I don't like to advise you against your own feelings, Adam, if they now urge you strongly to go and see her to-morrow morning, even without her consent. It is just possible, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, that the interview might affect her favorably. But I grieve to say I have scarcely any hope of that. She didn't seem agitated when I mentioned your name; she only said 'No,' in the same cold, obstinate way as usual. And if the meeting had no good effect on her, it would be pure, useless suffering to you — severe suffering, I fear. She is very much changed" . . .

Adam started up from his chair, and seized his hat which lay on the table. But he stood still then, and looked at Mr. Irwine, as if he had a question to ask, which it was yet difficult to utter. Bartle Massey rose quietly, turned the key in the door, and put it in his pocket.

"Is he come back?" said Adam at last.

"No, he is not," said Mr. Irwine, quietly. "Lay down your hat, Adam, unless you like to walk out with me for a little fresh air. I fear you have not been out again to-day."

"You needn't deceive me, sir," said Adam, looking hard at Mr. Irwine, and speaking in a tone of angry suspicion. "You needn't be afraid of me. I only want justice. I want him to



feel what she feels. It's his work . . . she was a child as it 'ud ha' gone t' anybody's heart to look at . . . I don't care what she's done . . . it was him brought her to it. And he shall know it . . . he shall feel it . . . if there's a just God, he shall feel what it is t' ha' brought a child like her to sin and misery."

"I'm not deceiving you, Adam," said Mr. Irwine. "Arthur Donnithorne is not come back — was not come back when I left. I have left a letter for him: he will know all as soon as ho arrives."

"But you don't mind about it," said Adam, indignantly. "You think it doesn't matter as she lies there in shame and misery, and he knows nothing about it — he suffers nothing."

"Adam, he *will* know — he *will* suffer, long and bitterly. He has a heart and a conscience: I can't be entirely deceived in his character. I am convinced — I am sure he didn't fall under temptation without a strnggle. He may be weak, but he is not callous, not coldly selfish. I am persuaded that this will be a shock of which he will feel the effects all his life. Why do you crave vengeance in this way? No amount of torture that you could inflict on *him* could benefit *her*."

"No — O God, no," Adam groaned out, sinking on his chair again; "but then, *that's the deepest curse of all . . . that's what makes the blackness of it . . . it can never be undone*. My poor Hetty . . . she can nover be my sweet Hetty again . . . the prettiest thing God had made — smiling up at me . . . I thought she loved me . . . and was good" . . .

Adam's voice had been gradually sinking into a hoarse under-tone, as if he were only talking to himself; but now he said abruptly, looking at Mr. Irwine, —

"But she isn't as guilty as they say? You don't think she is, sir? She can't ha' done it."

"That perhaps can never be known with oertainty, Adam," Mr. Irwine answered, gently. "In these cases we sometimes form our judgment on what seems to us strong evidence, and yet, for want of knowing some small fact, our judgment is wrong. But suppose the worst: you have no right to say that the guilt of her crime lies with him, and that he ought to bear the punishment. It is not for us men to apportion the shares of moral guilt and retribution. We find it impossible to avoid mistakes even in determining who has committed a single criminal act, and the problem how far a man is to be held responsible for the unforeseen consequences of his own deed, is one that might well make us tremble to look into it.

The evil consequences that may lie folded in a single act of selfish indulgence, is a thought so awful that it ought surely to awaken some feeling less presumptuous than a rash desire to punish. You have a mind that can understand this fully, Adam, when you are calm. Don't suppose I can't enter into the anguish that drives you into this state of revengeful hatred; but think of this: if you were to obey your passion — for it *is* passion, and you deceive yourself in calling it justice — it might be with you precisely as it has been with Arthur; nay, worse; your passion might lead you yourself into a horrible crime."

"No — not worse," said Adam, bitterly; "I don't believe it's worse — I'd sooner do it — I'd sooner do a wickedness as I could suffer for by myself, than ha' brought *her* to do wickedness and then stand by and see 'em punish 'her while they let me alone; and all for a bit o' pleasure, as, if he'd had a man's heart in him, he'd ha' cut his hand off sooner than he'd ha' taken it. What if he didn't foresee what's happened? He foresaw enough: he'd no right to expect anything but harm and shame to her. And then he wanted to smooth it off wi' lies. No — there's plenty o' things folks are hanged for, not half so hateful as that: let a man do what he will, if he knows he's to bear the punishment himself, he isn't half so bad as a mean selfish coward as makes things easy t' himself, and knows all the while the punishment 'll fall on somebody else."

"There again you partly deceive yourself, Adam. There is no sort of wrong deed of which a man can bear the punishment alone; you can't isolate yourself, and say that the evil which is in you shall not spread. Men's lives are as thoroughly blended with each other as the air they breathe: evil spreads as necessarily as disease. I know, I feel the terrible extent of suffering this sin of Arthur's has caused to others; but so does every sin cause suffering to others besides those who commit it. An act of vengeance on your part against Arthur would simply be another evil added to those we are suffering under: you could not bear the punishment alone; you would entail the worst sorrows on every one who loves you. You would have committed an act of blind fury, that would leave all the present evils just as they were, and add worse evils to them. You may tell me that you meditate no fatal act of vengeance: but the feeling in your mind is what gives birth to such actions, and as long as you indulge it, as long as you do not see that to fix your mind on Arthur's punishment is revenge, and not justice, you are in danger of

being led on to the commission of some great wrong. Remember what you told me about your feelings after you had given that blow to Arthur in the Grove."

Adam was silent: the last words had called up a vivid image of the past, and Mr. Irwine left him to his thoughts, while he spoke to Bartle Massey about old Mr. Donnithorne's funeral and other matters of an indifferent kind. But at length Adam turned round and said, in a more subdued tone,—

"I've not asked about 'em at th' Hall Farm, sir. Is Mr. Poyser coming?"

"He is come; he is in Stoniton to-night. But I could not advise him to see you, Adam. His own mind is in a very perturbed state, and it is best he should not see you till you are calmer."

"Is Dinah Morris come to 'em, sir? Seth said they'd sent for her."

"No. Mr. Poyser tells me she was not come when he left. They're afraid the letter has not reached her. It seems they had no exact address."

Adam sat ruminating a little while, and then said,—

"I wonder if Dinah 'ud ha' gone to see her. But perhaps the Poyzers would ha' been sorely against it, since they won't come nigh her themselves. But I think she would, for the Methodists are great folks for going into the prisons; and Seth said he thought she would. She'd a very tender way with her, Dinah had; I wonder if she could ha' done any good. You never saw her, sir, did you?"

"Yes, I did: I had a conversation with her—she pleased me a good deal. And now you mention it, I wish she would come; for it is possible that a gentle, mild woman like her might move Hetty to open her heart. The jail chaplain is rather harsh in his manner."

"But it's o' no use if she doesn't come," said Adam, sadly.

"If I'd thought of it earlier, I would have taken some measures for finding her out," said Mr. Irwine, "but it's too late now, I fear . . . Well, Adam, I must go now. Try to get some rest to-night. God bless you. I'll see you early to-morrow morning."

## CHAPTER XLII.

## THE MORNING OF THE TRIAL.

AT one o'clock the next day, Adam was alone in his dull upper room; his watch lay before him on the table, as if he were counting the long minutes. He had no knowledge of what was likely to be said by the witnesses on the trial, for he had shrunk from all the particulars connected with Hetty's arrest and accusation. This brave active man, who would have hastened towards any danger or toil to rescue Hetty from an apprehended wrong or misfortune, felt himself powerless to contemplate irremediable evil and suffering. The susceptibility which would have been an impelling force where there was any possibility of action, became helpless anguish when he was obliged to be passive, or else sought an active outlet in the thought of inflicting justice on Arthur. Energetic natures, strong for all strenuous deeds, will often rush away from a hopeless sufferer, as if they were hard-hearted. It is the overmastering sense of pain that drives them. They shrink by an ungovernable instinct, as they would shrink from laceration. Adam had brought himself to think of seeing Hetty, if she would consent to see him, because he thought the meeting might possibly be a good to her — might help to melt away this terrible hardness they told him of. If she saw he bore her no ill-will for what she had done to him, she might open her heart to him. But this resolution had been an immense effort; he trembled at the thought of seeing her changed face, as a timid woman trembles at the thought of the surgeon's knife; and he chose now to bear the long hours of suspense, rather than encounter what seemed to him the more intolerable agony of witnessing her trial.

Deep, unspeakable suffering may well be called a baptism, a regeneration, the initiation into a new state. The yearning memories, the bitter regret, the agonized sympathy, the struggling appeals to the Invisible Right — all the intense emotions which had filled the days and nights of the past week, and were compressing themselves again like an eager crowd into the hours of this single morning, made Adam look back

on all the previous years as if they had been a dim sleepy existence, and he had only now awaked to full consciousness. It seemed to him as if he had always before thought it a light thing that men should suffer; as if all that he had himself endured and called sorrow before, was only a moment's stroke that had never left a bruise. Doubtless a great anguish may do the work of years, and we may come out from that baptism of fire with a soul full of new awe and new pity.

"O God," Adam groaned, as he leaned on the table, and looked blankly at the face of the watch, "and men have suffered like this before . . . and poor helpless young things have suffered like her. . . . Such a little while ago looking so happy and so pretty . . . kissing 'em all, her grandfather and all of 'em, and they wishing her luck. . . . O my poor, poor Hetty . . . lost think on it now?"

Adam started and looked round towards the door. Vixen had begun to whimper, and there was a sound of a stick and a lame walk on the stairs. It was Bartle Massey come back. Could it be all over?

Bartle entered quietly, and, going up to Adam, grasped his hand and said, "I'm just come to look at you, my boy, for the folks are gone out of court for a bit."

Adam's heart beat so violently, he was unable to speak—he could only return the pressure of his friend's hand; and Bartle, drawing up the other chair, came and sat in front of him, taking off his hat and his spectacles.

"That's a thing never happened to me before," he observed—"to go out o' door with my spectacles on. I clean forgot to take 'em off."

The old man made this trivial remark, thinking it better not to respond at all to Adam's agitation: he would gather, in an indirect way, that there was nothing decisive to communicate at present.

"And now," he said, rising again, "I must see to your having a bit of the loaf, and some of that wine Mr. Irwine sent this morning. He'll be angry with me if you don't have it. Come, now," he went on, bringing forward the bottle and the loaf, and pouring some wine into a cup, "I must have a bit and a sup myself. Drink a drop with me, my lad—drink with me."

Adam pushed the cup gently away, and said, entreatingly, "Tell me about it, Mr. Massey—tell me all about it. Was she there? Have they begun?"

"Yes, my boy, yes—it's taken all the time since I first

went; but they're slow, they're slow; and there's the counsel they've got for her puts a spoke in the wheel whenever he can, and makes a deal to do with cross-examining the witnesses, and quarrelling with the other lawyers. That's all he can do for the money they give him; and it's a big sum — it's a big sum. But he's a 'cute fellow, with an eye that 'ud pick the needles out of the hay in no time. If a man had got no feelings, it 'ud be as good as a demonstration to listen to what goes on in court; but a tender heart makes one stupid. I'd have given up figures forever only to have had some good news to bring to you, my poor lad."

"But does it seem to be going against her?" said Adam. "Tell me what they've said. I must know it now — I must know what they have to bring against her."

"Why, the chief evidence yet has been the doctors; all but Martin Poyser — poor Martin. Everybody in court felt for him — it was like one sob, the sound they made when he came down again. The worst was, when they told him to look at the prisoner at the bar. It was hard work, poor fellow — it was hard work. Adam, my boy, the blow falls heavily on him as well as you: you must help poor Martin; you must show courage. Drink some wine now, and show me you mean to bear it like a man."

Bartle had made the right sort of appeal. Adam, with an air of quiet obedience, took up the cup, and drank a little.

"Tell me how *she* looked," he said, presently.

"Frightened, very frightened, when they first brought her in; it was the first sight of the crowd and the judge, poor creatur. And there's a lot o' foolish women in fine clothes, with gewgaws all up their arms and feathers on their heads, sitting near the judge: they've dressed themselves out in that way, one 'ud think, to be scarecrows and warnings against any man ever meddling with a woman again; they put up their glasses, and stared and whispered. But after that she stood like a white image, staring down at her hands, and seeming neither to hear nor see anything. And she's as white as a sheet. She didn't speak when they asked her if she'd plead 'guilty' or 'not guilty,' and they pled 'not guilty' for her. But when she heard her uncle's name, there seemed to go a shiver right through her; and when they told him to look at her, she hung her head down, and cowered, and hid her face in her hands. He'd much ado to speak, poor man, his voice trembled so. And the counsellors, — who look as harl as nails mostly, — I saw, spared him as much as they could.

Mr. Irwine put himself near him, and went with him out o' court. Ah, it's a great thing in a man's life to be able to stand by a neighbor and uphold him in such trouble as that."

"God bless him, and you too, Mr. Massey," said Adam, in a low voice, laying his hand on Bartle's arm.

"Ay, ay, he's good metal; he gives the right ring when you try him, our parson does. A man o' sense — says no more than's needful. He's not one of those that think they can comfort you with chattering, as if folks who stand by and look on knew a deal better what the trouble was than those who have to bear it. I've had to do with such folks in my time — in the south, when I was in trouble myself. Mr. Irwine is to be a witness himself, by and by, on her side, you know, to speak to her character and bringing up."

"But the other evidence . . . does it go hard against her?" said Adam. "What do you think, Mr. Massey? Tell me the truth."

"Yes, my lad, yes: the truth is the best thing to tell. It must come at last. The doctors' evidence is heavy on her — is heavy. But she's gone on denying she's had a child from first to last: these poor silly women-things — they've not the sense to know it's no use denying what's proved. It'll make against her with the jury, I doubt, her being so obstinate: they may be less for recommending her to mercy, if the verdict's against her. But Mr. Irwine 'ull leave no stone unturned with the judge — you may rely upon that, Adam."

"Is there nobody to stand by her, and seem to care for her in the court?" said Adam.

"There's the chaplain o' the jail sits near her, but he's a sharp ferrety-faced man — another sort o' flesh and blood to Mr. Irwine. They say the jail chaplains are mostly the fag-end o' the clergy."

"There's one man as ought to be there," said Adam, bitterly. Presently he drew himself up, and looked fixedly out of the window, apparently turning over some new idea in his mind.

"Mr. Massey," he said at last, pushing the hair off his forehead, "I'll go back with you. I'll go into court. It's cowardly of me to keep away. I'll stand by her — I'll own her — for all she's been deceitful. They oughtn't to cast her off — her own flesh and blood. We hand folks over to God's mercy, and show none ourselves. I used to be hard sometimes: I'll never be hard again. I'll go, Mr. Massey — I'll go with you."

There was a decision in Adam's manner which would have prevented Bartle from opposing him, even if he had wished to do so. He only said, —

"Take a bit, then, and another sup, Adam, for the love of me. See, I must stop and eat a morsel. Now, you take some."

Nerved by an active resolution, Adam took a morsel of bread, and drank some wine. He was haggard and unshaven, as he had been yesterday, but he stood upright again, and looked more like the Adam Bede of former days.

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE VERDICT.

THE place fitted up that day as a court of justice was a grand old hall, now destroyed by fire. The mid-day light that fell on the close pavement of human heads, was shed through a line of high pointed windows, variegated with the mellow tints of old painted glass. Grim dusty armor hung in high relief in front of the dark oaken gallery at the farther end; and under the broad arch of the great mullioned window opposite was spread a curtain of old tapestry, covered with dim melancholy figures, like a dozing indistinct dream of the past. It was a place that through the rest of the year was haunted with the shadowy memories of old kings and queens, unhappy, discrowned, imprisoned; but to-day all those shadows had fled, and not a soul in the vast hall felt the presence of any but a living sorrow, which was quivering in warm hearts.

But that sorrow seemed to have made itself feebly felt hitherto, now when Adam Bede's tall figure was suddenly seen, being ushered to the side of the prisoner's dock. In the broad sunlight of the great hall, among the sleek shaven faces of other men, the marks of suffering in his face were startling even to Mr. Irwine, who had last seen him in the dim light of his small room; and the neighbors from Hayslope who were present, and who told Hetty Sorrel's story by their firesides in their old age, never forgot to say how it moved them when Adam Bede, poor fellow, taller by the head than



most of the people round him, came into court, and took his place by her side.

But Hetty did not see him. She was standing in the same position Bartle Massey had described, her hands crossed over each other, and her eyes fixed on them. Adam had not dared to look at her in the first moments, but at last, when the attention of the court was withdrawn by the proceedings, he turned his face towards her with the resolution not to shrink.

Why did they say she was so changed? In the corpse we love, it is the *likeness* we see — it is the likeness, which makes itself felt the more keenly because something else *was* and *is not*. There they were — the sweet face and neck, with the dark tendrils of hair, the long dark lashes, the rounded cheek and the pouting lips: pale and thin — yes — but like Hetty, and only Hetty. Others thought she looked as if some demon had cast a blighting glance upon her, withered up the woman's soul in her, and left only a hard despairing obstinacy. But the mother's yearning, that completest type of the life in another life which is the essence of real human love, feels the presence of the cherished child even in the debased, degraded man; and to Adam, this pale, hard-looking culprit, was the Hetty who had smiled at him in the garden under the apple-tree boughs — she was that Hetty's corpse, which he had trembled to look at the first time, and then was unwilling to turn away his eyes from.

But presently he heard something that compelled him to listen, and made the sense of sight less absorbing. A woman was in the witness-box, a middle-aged woman, who spoke in a firm distinct voice. She said, —

“My name is Sarah Stone. I am a widow, and keep a small shop licensed to sell tobacco, snuff, and tea, in Church Lane, Stoniton. The prisoner at the bar is the same young woman who came, looking ill and tired, with a basket on her arm, and asked for a lodging at my house on Saturday evening, the 27th of February. She had taken the house for a public, because there was a figure against the door. And when I said I didn't take in lodgers, the prisoner began to cry, and said she was too tired to go anywhere else, and she only wanted a bed for one night. And her prettiness, and her condition, and something respectable about her clothes and looks, and the trouble she seemed to be in, made me as I couldn't find in my heart to send her away at once. I asked her to sit down, and gave her some tea, and asked her where she was going, and where her friends were. She said she was going home to her

friends: they were farming folks a good way off, and she'd had a long journey that had cost her more money than she expected, so as she'd hardly any money left in her pocket, and was afraid of going where it would cost her much. She had been obliged to sell most of the things out of her basket but she'd thankfully give a shilling for a bed. I saw no reason why I shouldn't take the young woman in for the night. I had only one room, but there were two beds in it, and I told her she might stay with me. I thought she'd been led wrong, and got into trouble, but if she was going to her friends, it would be a good work to keep her out of further harm."

The witness then stated that in the night a child was born, and she identified the baby-clothes then shown to her as those in which she had herself dressed the child.

"Those are the clothes. I made them myself, and had kept them by me ever since my last child was born. I took a deal of trouble both for the child and the mother. I couldn't help taking to the little thing and being anxious about it. I didn't send for a doctor, for there seemed no need. I told the mother in the daytime she must tell me the name of her friends, and where they lived, and let me write to them. She said, by and by she would write herself, but not to-day. She would have no nay, but she would get up and be dressed, in spite of everything I could say. She said she felt quite strong enough; and it was wonderful what spirit she showed. But I wasn't quite easy what I should do about her, and towards evening I made up my mind I'd go, after Meeting was over, and speak to our minister about it. I left the house about half-past eight o'clock. I didn't go out at the shop door, but at the back door, which opens into a narrow alley. I've only got the ground-floor of the house, and the kitchen and bedroom both look into the alley. I left the prisoner sitting up by the fire in the kitchen with the baby on her lap. She hadn't cried or seemed low at all, as she did the night before. I thought she had a strange look with her eyes, and she got a bit flushed towards evening. I was afraid of the fever, and I thought I'd call and ask an acquaintance of mine, an experienced woman, to come back with me when I went out. It was a very dark night. I didn't fasten the door behind me: there was no lock: it was a latch with a bolt inside, and when there was nobody in the house I always went out at the shop door. But I thought there was no danger in leaving it unfastened that little while. I was longer than I meant to be, for I had to wait for the woman that came back

with me. It was an hour and a half before we got back, and when we went in, the candle was standing burning just as I left it, but the prisoner and the baby were both gone. She'd taken her cloak and bonnet, but she'd left the basket and the things in it. . . . I was dreadful frightened, and angry with her for going. I didn't go to give information, because I'd no thought she meant to do any harm, and I knew she had money in her pocket to buy her food and lodging. I didn't like to set the constable after her, for she'd a right to go from me if she liked."

The effect of this evidence on Adam was electrical; it gave him new force. Hetty could not be guilty of the crime—her heart must have clung to her baby—else why should she have taken it with her? She might have left it behind. The little creature had died naturally, and then she had hidden it: babies were so liable to death—and there might be the strongest suspicions without any proof of guilt. His mind was so occupied with imaginary arguments against such suspicions, that he could not listen to the cross-examination by Hetty's counsel, who tried, without result, to elicit evidence that the prisoner had shown some movements of maternal affection towards the child. The whole time this witness was being examined, Hetty had stood as motionless as before: no word seemed to arrest her ear. But the sound of the next witness's voice touched a chord that was still sensitive; she gave a start and a frightened look towards him, but immediately turned away her head and looked down at her hands as before. This witness was a man, a rough peasant. He said, —

"My name is John Olding. I am a laborer, and live at Tedd's Hole, two miles out of Stoniton. A week last Monday, towards one o'clock in the afternoon, I was going towards Hetton Coppice, and about a quarter of a mile from the coppice I saw the prisoner, in a red cloak, sitting under a bit of a haystack not far off the stile. She got up when she saw me, and seemed as if she'd be walking on the other way. It was a regular road through the fields, and nothing very uncommon to see a young woman there, but I took notice of her because she looked white and scared. I should have thought she was a beggar-woman, only for her good clothes. I thought she looked a bit crazy, but it was no business of mine. I stood and looked back after her, but she went right on while she was in sight. I had to go to the other side of the coppice to look after some stakes. There's a road right through it, and bits of openings here and there, where the trees have been cut

down, and some of 'em not carried away. I didn't go straight along the road, but turned off towards the middle, and took a shorter way towards the spot I wanted to get to. I hadn't got far out of the road into one of the open places, before I heard a strange cry. I thought it didn't come from any animal I knew, but I wasn't for stopping to look about just then. But it went on, and seemed so strange to me in that place, I couldn't help stopping to look. I began to think I might make some money of it, if it was a new thing. But I had hard work to tell which way it came from, and for a good while I kept looking up at the boughs. And then I thought it came from the ground; and there was a lot of timber-choppings lying about, and loose pieces of turf, and a trunk or two. And I looked about among them, but could find nothing; and at last the cry stopped. So I was for giving it up, and I went on about my business. But when I came back the same way pretty nigh an hour after, I couldn't help laying down my stakes to have another look. And just as I was stooping and laying down the stakes, I saw something odd and round and whitish lying on the ground under a nut-bush by the side of me. And I stooped down on hands and knees to pick it up. And I saw it was a little baby's hand."

At these words a thrill ran through the court. Hetty was visibly trembling: now, for the first time, she seemed to be listening to what a witness said.

"There was a lot of timber-choppings put together just where the ground went hollow, like, under the bush, and the hand came out from among them. But there was a hole left in one place, and I could see down it, and see the child's head; and I made haste and did away the turf and the choppings, and took out the child. It had got comfortable clothes on, but its body was cold, and I thought it must be dead. I made haste back with it out of the wood, and took it home to my wife. She said it was dead, and I'd better take it to the parish and tell the constable. And I said, 'I'll lay my life it's that young woman's child as I met going to the coppice.' But she seemed to be gone clean out of sight. And I took the child on to Hutton parish and told the constable, and we went on to Justice Hardy. And then we went looking after the young woman till dark at night, and we went and gave information at Stoniton, as they might stop her. And the next morning, another constable came to me, to go with him to the spot where I found the child. And when we got there, there was the prisoner a-sitting against the bush where I

found the child; and she cried out when she saw us, but she never offered to move. She'd got a big piece of bread on her lap."

Adam had given a faint groan of despair while this witness was speaking. He had hidden his face on his arm, which rested on the boarding in front of him. It was the supreme moment of his suffering: Hetty was guilty: and he was silently calling to God for help. He heard no more of the evidence, and was unconscious when the case for the prosecution had closed — unconscious that Mr. Irwine was in the witness-box, telling of Hetty's unblemished character in her own parish, and of the virtuous habits in which she had been brought up. This testimony could have no influence on the verdict, but it was given as part of that plea for mercy which her own counsel would have made if he had been allowed to speak for her — a favor not granted to criminals in those stern times.

At last Adam lifted up his head, for there was a general movement round him. The judge had addressed the jury, and they were retiring. The decisive moment was not far off. Adam felt a shuddering horror that would not let him look at Hetty, but she had long relapsed into her blank hard indifference. All eyes were strained to look at her, but she stood like a statue of dull despair.

There was a mingled rustling, whispering, and low buzzing throughout the court during this interval. The desire to listen was suspended, and every one had some feeling or opinion to express in under-tones. Adam sat looking blankly before him, but he did not see the objects that were right in front of his eyes — the counsel and attorneys talking with an air of cool business, and Mr. Irwine in low earnest conversation with the judge: did not see Mr. Irwine sit down again in agitation, and shake his head mournfully when somebody whispered to him. The inward action was too intense for Adam to take in outward objects until some strong sensation roused him.

It was not very long, hardly more than a quarter of an hour, before the knock which told that the jury had come to their decision, fell as a signal for silence on every ear. It is sublime — that sudden pause of a great multitude, which tells that one soul moves in them all. Deeper and deeper the silence seemed to become, like the deepening night, while the jurymen's names were called over, and the prisoner was made to hold up her hand, and the jury were asked for their verdict. "Guilty."

It was the verdict every one expected, but there was a sigh of disappointment from some hearts, that it was followed by no recommendation to mercy. Still the sympathy of the court was not with the prisoner: the unnaturalness of her crime stood out the more harshly by the side of her hard immovability and obstinate silence. Even the verdict, to distant eyes, had not appeared to move her; but those who were near saw her trembling.

The stillness was less intense until the judge put on his black cap, and the chaplain in his canonicals was observed behind him. Then it deepened again, before the orier had had time to command silence. If any sound were heard, it must have been the sound of beating hearts. The judge spoke, —

“Hester Sorrel.” . . .

The blood rushed to Hetty's face, and then fled back again, as she looked up at the judge, and kept her wide-open eyes fixed on him, as if fascinated by fear. Adam had not yet turned towards her: there was a deep horror, like a great gulf, between them. But at the words — “and then to be hanged by the neck till you be dead,” a piercing shriek ran through the hall. It was Hetty's shriek. Adam started to his feet and stretched out his arms towards her; but the arms could not reach her: she had fallen down in a fainting-fit, and was carried out of court.

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## CHAPTER XLIV.

### ARTHUR'S RETURN.

WHEN Arthur Donnithorne landed at Liverpool, and read the letter from his aunt Lydia, briefly announcing his grandfather's death, his first feeling was, “Poor grandfather! I wish I could have got to him to be with him when he died. He might have felt or wished something at the last that I shall never know now. It was a lonely death.”

It is impossible to say that his grief was deeper than that. Pity and softened memory took place of the old antagonism, and in his busy thoughts about the future, as the chaise carried him rapidly along towards the home where he was now to be master, there was a continually recurring effort to remem-

ber anything by which he could show a regard for his grandfather's wishes, without counteracting his own cherished aims for the good of the tenants and the estate. But it is not in human nature — only in human pretence — for a young man like Arthur, with a fine constitution and fine spirits, thinking well of himself, believing that others think well of him, and having a very ardent intention to give them more and more reason for that good opinion, — it is not possible for such a young man, just coming into a splendid estate through the death of a very old man whom he was not fond of, to feel anything very different from exultant joy. *Now* his real life was beginning; now he would have room and opportunity for action, and he would use them. He would show the Loamshire people what a fine country gentleman was; he would not exchange that career for any other under the sun. He felt himself riding over the hills in the breezy autumn days, looking after favorite plans of drainage and enclosure; then admired on sombre mornings as the best rider on the best horse in the hunt; spoken well of on market-days as a first-rate landlord; by and by making speeches at election dinners, and showing a wonderful knowledge of agriculture; the patron of new ploughs and drills, the severe upbraider of negligent landowners, and withal a jolly fellow that everybody must like, — happy faces greeting him everywhere on his own estate, and the neighboring families on the best terms with him. The Irwines should dine with him every week, and have their own carriage to come in, for in some very delicate way that Arthur would devise, the lay-impropriator of the Hayslope tithes would insist on paying a couple of hundreds more to the Vicar; and his aunt should be as comfortable as possible, and go on living at the Chase, if she liked, in spite of her old-maidish ways, — at least until he was married; and that event lay in the indistinct background, for Arthur had not yet seen the woman who would play the lady-wife to the first-rate country gentleman.

These were Arthur's chief thoughts, so far as a man's thoughts through hours of travelling can be compressed into a few sentences, which are only like the list of names telling you what are the scenes in a long, long panorama, full of color, of detail, and of life. The happy faces Arthur saw greeting him were not pale abstractions, but real ruddy faces, long familiar to him: Martin Poyser was there — the whole Poyser family.

What — Hetty?

Yes; for Arthur was at ease about Hetty: not quite at ease about the past, for a certain burning of the ears would come whenever he thought of the scenes with Adam last August,—but at ease about her present lot. Mr. Irwine, who had been a regular correspondent, telling him all the news about the old places and people, had sent him word nearly three months ago that Adam Bede was not to marry Mary Burge, as he had thought, but pretty Hetty Sorrel. Martin Poyser and Adam himself had both told Mr. Irwin all about it;—that Adam had been deeply in love with Hetty these two years, and that now it was agreed they were to be married in March. That stalwart rogue Adam was more susceptible than the Rector had thought; it was really quite an idyllic love affair; and if it had not been too long to tell in a letter, he would have liked to describe to Arthur the blushing looks and the simple strong words with which the fine honest fellow told his secret. He knew Arthur would like to hear that Adam had this sort of happiness in prospect.

Yes, indeed! Arthur felt there was not air enough in the room to satisfy his renovated life, when he had read that passage in the letter. He threw up the windows, he rushed out of doors into the December air, and greeted every one who spoke to him with an eager gayety, as if there had been news of a fresh Nelson victory. For the first time that day since he had come to Windsor, he was in true boyish spirits: the load that had been pressing upon him was gone; the haunting fear had vanished. He thought he could conquer his bitterness towards Adam now—could offer him his hand, and ask to be his friend again, in spite of that painful memory which would still make his ears burn. He had been knocked down, and he had been forced to tell a lie: such things make a scar, do what we will. But if Adam were the same again as in the old days, Arthur wished to be the same too, and to have Adam mixed up with his business and his future, as he had always desired before that accursed meeting in August. Nay, he would do a great deal more for Adam than he should otherwise have done, when he came into the estate; Hetty's husband had a special claim on him—Hetty herself should feel that any pain she had suffered through Arthur in the past, was compensated to her a hundredfold. For really she could not have felt much, since she had so soon made up her mind to marry Adam.

You perceive clearly what sort of picture Adam and Hetty made in the panorama of Arthur's thoughts on his journey home.



ward. It was March now; they were soon to be married; perhaps they were already married. And *now* it was actually in his power to do a great deal for them. Sweet — sweet little Hetty! The little puss hadn't cared for him half as much as he cared for her; for he was a great fool about her still — was almost afraid of seeing her — indeed, had not cared much to look at any other woman since he parted from her. That little figure coming towards him in the Grove, those dark-fringed childish eyes, the lovely lips put up to kiss him — that picture had got no fainter with the lapse of months. And she would look just the same. It was impossible to think how he could meet her: he should certainly tremble. Strange, how long this sort of influence lasts; for he was certainly not in love with Hetty now: he had been earnestly desiring, for months, that she should marry Adam, and there was nothing that contributed more to his happiness in these moments than the thought of their marriage. It was the exaggerating effect of imagination that made his heart still beat a little more quickly at the thought of her. When he saw the little thing again as she really was, as Adam's wife, at work quite prosaically in her new home, he should perhaps wonder at the possibility of his past feelings. Thank heaven it had turned out so well! He should have plenty of affairs and interests to fill his life now, and not be in danger of playing the fool again.

Pleasant the crack of the postboy's whip! Pleasant the sense of being hurried along in swift ease through English scenes, so like those round his own home, only not quite so charming. Here was a market-town — very much like Tredleston — where the arms of the neighboring lord of the manor were borne on the sign of the principal inn: then mere fields and hedges, their vicinity to a market-town carrying an agreeable suggestion of high rent, till the land began to assume a trimmer look, the woods were more frequent, and at length a white or red mansion looked down from a moderate eminence, or allowed him to be aware of its parapet and chimneys among the dense-looking masses of oaks and elms — masses reddened now with early buds. And close at hand came the village: the small church, with its red-tiled roof, looking humble even among the faded half-timbered houses; the old green grave-stones with noddles round them; nothing fresh and bright but the children, opening round eyes at the swift post-chaise; nothing noisy and busy but the gaping curs of mysterious pedigree. What a much prettier village Hayslope was! And it should not be neglected like this place: vigorous repairs

should go on everywhere among farm-buildings and cottages, and travellers in post-chaises, coming along the Rosseter road, should do nothing but admire as they went. And Adam Bede should superintend all the repairs, for he had a share in Burge's business now, and, if he liked, Arthur would put some money into the concern, and buy the old man out in another year or two. That was an ugly fault in Arthur's life, that affair last summer; but the future should make amends. Many men would have retained a feeling of vindictiveness towards Adam; but *he* would not — he would resolutely overcome all littleness of that kind, for he had certainly been very much in the wrong; and though Adam had been harsh and violent, and had thrust on him a painful dilemma, the poor fellow was in love, and had real provocation. No; Arthur had not an evil feeling in his mind towards any human being: he was happy, and would make every one else happy that came within his reach.

And here was dear old Hayslope at last, sleeping, on the hill, like a quiet old place as it was, in the late afternoon sunlight; and opposite to it the great shoulders of the Binton Hills, below them the purplish blackness of the hanging woods, and at last the pale front of the Abbey, looking out from among the oaks of the Chase, as if anxious for the heir's return. "Poor grandfather! and he lies dead there. *He* was a young fellow once, coming into the estate, and making his plans. So the world goes round! Aunt Lydia must feel very desolate, poor thing; but she shall be indulged as much as she indulges her fat Fido."

The wheels of Arthur's chaise had been anxiously listened for at the Chase, for to-day was Friday, and the funeral had already been deferred two days. Before it drew up on the gravel of the courtyard, all the servants in the house were assembled to receive him with a grave, decent welcome, befitting a house of death. A month ago, perhaps, it would have been difficult for them to have maintained a suitable sadness in their faces, when Mr. Arthur was come to take possession; but the hearts of the head-servants were heavy that day for another cause than the death of the old Squire, and more than one of them was longing to be twenty miles away, as Mr. Craig was, knowing what was to become of Hetty Sorrel — pretty Hetty Sorrel — whom they used to see every week. They had the partisanship of household servants who like their places, and were not inclined to go the full length of the severe indignation felt against him by the farming tenants, but rather to

make excuses for him; nevertheless, the upper servants, who had been on terms of neighborly intercourse with the Poyzers for many years, could not help feeling that the longed-for event of the young Squire's coming into the estate had been robbed of all its pleasantness.

To Arthur it was nothing surprising that the servants looked grave and sad: he himself was very much touched on seeing them all again, and feeling that he was in a new relation to them. It was that sort of pathetic emotion which has more pleasure than pain in it — which is perhaps one of the most delicious of all states to a good-natured man, conscious of the power to satisfy his good-nature. His heart swelled agreeably as he said, —

"Well, Mills, how is my aunt?"

But now Mr. Bygate, the lawyer, who had been in the house ever since the death, came forward to give deferential greetings and answer all questions, and Arthur walked with him towards the library, where his aunt Lydia was expecting him. Aunt Lydia was the only person in the house who knew nothing about Hetty: her sorrow as a maiden daughter was unmixed with any other thoughts than those of anxiety about funeral arrangements and her own future lot; and, after the manner of women, she mourned for the father who had made her life important, all the more because she had a secret sense that there was little mourning for him in other hearts.

But Arthur kissed her tearful face more tenderly than he had ever done in his life before.

"Dear aunt," he said, affectionately, as he held her hand, "*your* loss is the greatest of all, but you must tell me how to try and make it up to you all the rest of your life."

"It was so sudden and so dreadful, Arthur," poor Miss Lydia began, pouring out her little complaints; and Arthur sat down to listen with impatient patience. When a pause came, he said, —

"Now, aunt I'll leave you for a quarter of an hour just to go to my own room, and then I shall come and give full attention to everything."

"My room is all ready for me, I suppose, Mills?" he said to the butler, who seemed to be lingering uneasily about the entrance-hall.

"Yes, sir, and there are letters for you; they are all laid on the writing-table in your dressing-room."

On entering the small anteroom which was called a dressing-room, but which Arthur really used only to lounge and write

in, he just cast his eyes on the writing-table, and saw that there were several letters and packets lying there; but he was in the uncomfortable dusty condition of a man who has had a long hurried journey, and he must really refresh himself by attending to his toilet a little, before he read his letters. Pym was there, making everything ready for him; and soon, with a delightful freshness about him, as if he were prepared to begin a new day, he went back into his dressing-room to open his letters. The level rays of the low afternoon sun entered directly at the window, and as Arthur seated himself in his velvet chair with their pleasant warmth upon him, he was conscious of that quiet well-being which perhaps you and I have felt on a sunny afternoon, when, in our brightest youth and health, life has opened a new vista for us, and long to-morrows of activity have stretched before us like a lovely plain which there was no need for hurrying to look at, because it was all our own.

The top letter was placed with its address upwards: it was in Mr. Irwine's handwriting, Arthur saw at once; and below the address was written, "To be delivered as soon as he arrives." Nothing could have been less surprising to him than a letter from Mr. Irwine at that moment: of course there was something he wished Arthur to know earlier than it was possible for them to see each other. At such a time as that it was quite natural that Irwine should have something pressing to say. Arthur broke the seal with an agreeable anticipation of soon seeing the writer.

*"I send this letter to meet you on your arrival, Arthur because I may then be at Staniton, whither I am called by the most painful duty it has ever been given me to perform; and it is right that you should know what I have to tell you without delay.*

*"I will not attempt to add by one word of reproach to the retribution that is now falling on you: any other words that I could write at this moment must be weak and unmeaning by the side of those in which I must tell you the simple fact.*

*"Hetty Sorrel is in prison, and will be tried on Friday for the crime of child-murder."* . . .

Arthur read no more. He started up from his chair, and stood for a single minute with a sense of violent convulsion in his whole frame, as if the life were going out of him with horrible throbs; but the next minute he had rushed out of

the room, still clutching the letter — he was hurrying along the corridor, and down the stairs into the hall. Mills was still there, but Arthur did not see him, as he passed like a hunted man across the hall and out along the gravel. The butler hurried out after him as fast as his elderly limbs could run: he guessed, he knew, where the young Squire was going.

When Mills got to the stables, a horse was being saddled, and Arthur was forcing himself to read the remaining words of the letter. He thrust it into his pocket as the horse was led up to him, and at that moment caught sight of Mills' anxious face in front of him.

"Tell them I'm gone — gone to Stoniton," he said in a muffled tone of agitation — sprang into the saddle, and set off at a gallop.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### IN THE PRISON.

NEAR sunset that evening an elderly gentleman was standing with his back against the smaller entrance-door of Stoniton jail, saying a few last words to the departing chaplain. The chaplain walked away, but the elderly gentleman stood still, looking down on the pavement, and stroking his chin with a ruminating air, when he was roused by a sweet clear woman's voice, saying, —

"Can I get into the prison, if you please?"

He turned his head, and looked fixedly at the speaker for a few moments without answering.

"I have seen you before," he said at last. "Do you remember preaching on the village green at Hayslope in Leamshire?"

"Yes, sir, surely, Are you the gentleman that stayed to listen on horseback?"

"Yes. Why do you want to go into the prison?"

"I want to go to Hetty Sorrel, the young woman who has been condemned to death — and to stay with her, if I may be permitted. Have you power in the prison, sir?"

"Yes; I am a magistrate, and can get admittance for you. But did you know this criminal, Hetty Sorrel?"

"Yes, we are kin: my own aunt married her uncle, Martin Poyser. But I was away at Leeds, and didn't know of this great trouble in time to get here before to-day. I entreat

you, sir, for the love of our heavenly Father, to let me go to her and stay with her."

"How did you know she was condemned to death, if you are only just come from Leeds?"

"I have seen my uncle since the trial, sir. He is gone back to his home now, and the poor sinner is forsaken of all. I beseech you to get leave for me to be with her."

"What! have you courage to stay all night in the prison? She is very sullen, and will scarcely make answer when she is spoken to."

"Oh, sir, it may please God to open her heart still. Don't let us delay."

"Come, then," said the elderly gentleman, ringing and gaining admission; "I know you have a key to unlock hearts."

Dinah mechanically took off her bonnet and shawl as soon as they were within the prison court, from the habit she had of throwing them off when she preached or prayed, or visited the sick; and when they entered the jailer's room, she laid them down on a chair unthinkingly. There was no agitation visible in her, but a deep concentrated calmness, as if, even when she was speaking, her soul was in prayer reposing on an unseen support.

After speaking to the jailer, the magistrate turned to her and said, "The turnkey will take you to the prisoner's cell, and leave you there for the night, if you desire it; but you can't have a light during the night—it is contrary to rules. My name is Colonel Townley: if I can help you in anything, ask the jailer for my address, and come to me. I take some interest in this Hetty Sorrel, for the sake of that fine fellow, Adam Bede: I happened to see him at Hayslope the same evening I heard you preach, and recognized him in court to-day, ill as he looked."

"Ah, sir, can you tell me anything about him? Can you tell me where he lodges? For my poor uncle was too much weighed down with trouble to remember."

"Close by here. I inquired all about him of Mr. Irwine. He lodges over a tinman's shop, in the street on the right hand as you entered the prison. There is an old schoolmaster with him. Now, good-by: I wish you success."

"Farewell, sir. I am grateful to you."

As Dinah crossed the prison court with the turnkey, the solemn evening light seemed to make the walls higher than they were by day, and the sweet pale face in the cap was

more than ever like a white flower on this background of gloom. The turnkey looked askance at her all the while, but never spoke: he somehow felt that the sound of his own rude voice would be grating just then. He struck a light as they entered the dark corridor leading to the condemned cell, and then said in his most civil tone, "It'll be pretty nigh dark in the cell a'ready; but I can stop with my light a bit, if you like."

"Nay, friend, thank you," said Dinah. "I wish to go in alone."

"As you like," said the jailer, turning the harsh key in the lock, and opening the door wide enough to admit Dinah. A jet of light from his lantern fell on the opposite corner of the cell, where Hetty was sitting on her straw pallet with her face buried in her knees. It seemed as if she were asleep, and yet the grating of the lock would have been likely to waken her.

The door closed again, and the only light in the cell was that of the evening sky, through the small high grating — enough to discern human faces by. Dinah stood still for a minute, hesitating to speak, because Hetty might be asleep; and looking at the motionless heap with a yearning heart. Then she said, softly, —

"Hetty!"

There was a slight movement perceptible in Hetty's frame — a start such as might have been produced by a feeble electrical shock; but she did not look up. Dinah spoke again, in a tone made stronger by irrepressible emotion, —

"Hetty . . . it's Dinah."

Again there was a slight, startled movement through Hetty's frame, and without uncovering her face, she raised her head a little, as if listening.

Hetty . . . Dinah is come to you."

After a moment's pause, Hetty lifted her head slowly and timidly from her knees, and raised her eyes. The two pale faces were looking at each other: one with a wild hard despair in it, the other full of sad, yearning love. Dinah unconsciously opened her arms and stretched them out.

"Don't you know me, Hetty? Don't you remember Dinah? Did you think I wouldn't come to you in trouble?"

Hetty kept her eyes fixed on Dinah's face, — at first like an animal that gazes, and gazes, and keeps aloof.

"I'm come to be with you, Hetty — not to leave you — to stay with you — to be your sister to the last."

Slowly, while Dinah was speaking, Hetty rose, took a step forward, and was clasped in Dinah's arms.

They stood so a long while, for neither of them felt the impulse to move apart again. Hetty, without any distinct thought of it, hung on this something that was come to clasp her now, while she was sinking helpless in a dark gulf; and Dinah felt a deep joy in the first sign that her love was welcomed by the wretched lost one. The light got fainter as they stood, and when at last they sat down on the straw pallet together, their faces had become indistinct.

Not a word was spoken. Dinah waited, hoping for a spontaneous word from Hetty; but she sat in the same dull despair, only clenching the hand that held hers, and leaning her cheek against Dinah's. It was the human contact she clung to, but she was not the less sinking into the dark gulf.

Dinah began to doubt whether Hetty was conscious who it was that sat beside her. She thought suffering and fear might have driven the poor sinner out of her mind. But it was borne in upon her, as she afterwards said, that she must not hurry God's work: we are over-hasty to speak — as if God did not manifest himself by our silent feeling, and make his love felt through ours. She did not know how long they sat in that way, but it got darker and darker, till there was only a pale patch of light on the opposite wall: all the rest was darkness. But she felt the Divine presence more and more, — nay, as if she herself were a part of it, and it was the Divine pity that was beating in her heart, and was willing the rescue of this helpless one. At last she was prompted to speak, and find out how far Hetty was conscious of the present.

"Hetty," she said, gently, "do you know who it is that sits by your side?"

"Yes," Hetty answered, slowly, "it's Dinah."

"And do you remember the time when we were at the Hall Farm together, and that night when I told you to be sure and think of me as a friend in trouble?"

"Yes," said Hetty. Then, after a pause, she added, "But you can do nothing for me. You can't make 'em do anything. They'll hang me o' Monday — it's Friday now."

As Hetty said the last words, she clung closer to Dinah, shuddering.

"No, Hetty, I can't save you from that death. But isn't the suffering less hard when you have somebody with you, that feels for you — that you can speak to, and say what's in your heart? . . . Yes, Hetty: you lean on me: you are glad to have me with you."



"You won't leave me, Dinah? You'll keep close to me?"

"No, Hetty, I won't leave you. I'll stay with you to the last. . . . But, Hetty, there is some one else in this cell besides me, some one close to you."

Hetty said, in a frightened whisper, "Who?"

"Some one who has been with you through all your hours of sin and trouble — who has known every thought you have had — has seen where you went, where you lay down and rose up again, and all the deeds you have tried to hide in darkness. And on Monday, when I can't follow you, — when my arms can't reach you, — when death has parted us, — He who is with us now, and knows all, will be with you then. It makes no difference — whether we live or die, we are in the presence of God."

"Oh, Dinah, won't nobody do anything for me? *Will* they hang me for certain? . . . I wouldn't mind if they'd let me live."

"My poor Hetty, death is very dreadful to you. I know it's dreadful. But if you had a friend to take care of you after death — in that other world — some one whose love is greater than mine — who can do everything? . . . If God our Father was your friend, and was willing to save you from sin and suffering, so as you should neither know wicked feelings nor pain again? If you could believe he loved you and would help you, as you believe I love you and will help you, it wouldn't be so hard to die on Monday, would it?"

"But I can't know anything about it," Hetty said, with sullen sadness.

"Because, Hetty, you are shutting up your soul against him, by trying to hide the truth. God's love and mercy can overcome all things — our ignorance, and weakness, and all the burden of our past wickedness — all things but our wilful sin; sin that we cling to, and will not give up. You believe in my love and pity for you, Hetty; but if you had not let me come near you, if you wouldn't have looked at me or spoken to me, you'd have shut me out from helping you: I couldn't have made you feel my love; I couldn't have told you what I felt for you. Don't shut God's love out in that way, by clinging to sin. . . . He can't bless you while you have one falsehood in your soul; his pardoning mercy can't reach you until you open your heart to him, and say, 'I have done this great wickedness; O God, save me, make me pure from sin.' While you cling to one sin and will not part with it, it must drag you down to misery after death, as it has

dragged you to misery here in this world, my poor, poor Hetty. It is sin that brings dread, and darkness, and despair: there is light and blessedness for us as soon as we cast it off: God enters our souls then, and teaches us, and brings us strength and peace. Cast it off now, Hetty — now: confess the wickedness you have done — the sin you have been guilty of against your heavenly Father. Let us kneel down together, for we are in the presence of God."

Hetty obeyed Dinah's movement, and sank on her knees. They still held each other's hands, and there was long silence. Then Dinah said, —

"Hetty, we are before God: he is waiting for you to tell the truth."

Still there was silence. At last Hetty spoke, in a tone of beseeching, —

"Dinah . . . help me . . . I can't feel anything like you . . . my heart is hard."

Dinah held the clinging hand, and all her soul went forth in her voice: —

"Jesus, thou present Saviour! Thou hast known the depths of all sorrow: thou hast entered that black darkness where God is not, and hast uttered the cry of the forsaken. Come, Lord, and gather of the fruits of thy travail and thy pleading: stretch forth thy hand, thou who art mighty to save to the uttermost, and rescue this lost one. She is clothed round with thick darkness: the fetters of her sin are upon her, and she cannot stir to come to thee: she can only feel her heart is hard, and she is helpless. She cries to me, thy weak creature. . . . Saviour! it is a blind cry to thee. Hear it! Pierce the darkness! Look upon her with thy face of love and sorrow, that thou didst turn on him who denied thee; and melt her hard heart.

"See, Lord, — I bring her, as they of old brought the sick and helpless, and thou didst heal them: I bear her on my arms and carry her before thee. Fear and trembling have taken hold on her; but she trembles only at the pain and death of the body: breathe upon her thy life-giving Spirit, and put a new fear within her — the fear of her sin. Make her dread to keep the accursed thing within her soul: make her feel the presence of the living God, who beholds all the past, to whom the darkness is as noonday; who is waiting now, at the eleventh hour, for her to turn to him, and confess her sin, and cry for mercy — now, before the night of death

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comes, and the moment of pardon is forever fled, like yestern day that returneth not.

"Saviour! it is yet time — time to snatch this poor soul from everlasting darkness. I believe — I believe in thy infinite love. What is *my* love or *my* pleading? It is quenched in thine. I can only clasp her in my weak arms, and urge her with my weak pity. Thou — thou wilt breathe on the dead soul, and it shall arise from the unanswering sleep of death.

"Yea, Lord, I see thee, coming through the darkness, coming, like the morning, with healing on thy wings. The marks of thy agony are upon thee — I see, I see thou art able and willing to save — thou wilt not let her perish forever.

"Come, mighty Saviour! let the dead hear thy voice; let the eyes of the blind be opened: let her see that God encompasses her; let her tremble at nothing but at the sin that cuts her off from him. Melt the hard heart; unseal the closed lips: make her cry with her whole soul, 'Father, I have sinned.' . . ."

"Dinah," Hetty sobbed out, throwing her arms round Dinah's neck, "I will speak . . . I will tell . . . I won't hide it any more."

But the tears and sobs were too violent. Dinah raised her gently from her knees, and seated her on the pallet again, sitting down by her side. It was a long time before the convulsed throat was quiet, and even then they sat some time in stillness and darkness, holding each other's hands. At last Hetty whispered, —

"I did do it, Dinah . . . I buried it in the wood . . . the little baby . . . and it cried . . . I heard it cry . . . ever such a way off . . . all night . . . and I went back because it cried."

She paused, and then spoke hurriedly in a louder, pleading tone.

"But I thought perhaps it wouldn't die — there might somebody find it — I didn't kill it — I didn't kill it myself. I put it down there and covered it up, and when I came back it was gone. . . . It was because I was so very miserable, Dinah . . . I didn't know where to go . . . and I tried to kill myself before, and I couldn't. Oh, I tried so to drown myself in the pool, and I couldn't. I went to Windsor — I ran away — did you know? I went to find him, as he might take care of me; and he was gone; and then I didn't know what to do. I

daredn't go back home again — I couldn't bear it. I couldn't have bore to look at anybody, for they'd have scorned me. I thought o' you sometimes, and thought I'd come to you, for I didn't think you'd be cross with me, and cry shame on me : I thought I could tell you. But then the other folks 'ud come to know it at last, and I couldn't bear that. It was partly thinking o' you made me come toward Stoniton ; and, besides, I was so frightened at going wandering about till I was a beggar-woman, and had nothing ; and sometimes it seemed as if I must go back to the Farm sooner than that. Oh, it was so dreadful, Dinah . . . I was so miserable . . . I wished I'd never been born into this world. I should never like to go into the green fields again — I hated 'em so in my misery."

Hetty paused again, as if the sense of the past were too strong upon her for words.

"And then I got to Stoniton, and I began to feel frightened that night, because I was so near home. And then the little baby was born, when I didn't expect it; and the thought came into my mind that I might get rid of it, and go home again. The thought came all of a sudden, as I was lying in the bed, and it got stronger and stronger . . . I longed so to go back again . . . I couldn't bear being so lonely, and coming to beg for want. And it gave me strength and resolution to get up and dress myself. I felt I must do it . . . I didn't know how . . . I thought I'd find a pool, if I could, like that other, in the corner of the field, in the dark. And when the woman went out, I felt as if I was strong enough to do anything . . . I thought I should get rid of all my misery, and go back home, and never let 'em know why I ran away. I put on my bonnet and shawl, and went out into the dark street, with the baby under my oloak; and I walked fast till I got into a street a good way off, and there was a public, and I got some warm stuff to drink and some bread. And I walked on and on, and I hardly felt the ground I trod on; and it got lighter, for there came the moon — Oh, Dinah, it frightened me when it first looked at me out o' the clouds — it never looked so before; and I turned out of the road into the fields, for I was afraid o' meeting anybody with the moon shining on me. And I came to a haystack, where I thought I could lie down and keep myself warm all night. There was a place out into it, where I could make me a bed; and I lay comfortable, and the baby was warm against me; and I must have gone to sleep for a good while, for when I woke it was morning, but not very light, and the baby was crying. And I saw a wood a

little way off . . . I thought there'd perhaps be a ditch or a pond there . . . and it was so early I thought I could hide the child there, and get a long way off before folks was up. And then I thought I'd go home—I'd get rides in carts and go home, and tell 'em I'd been to try and see for a place, and couldn't get one. I longed so for it, Dinah, I longed so to be safe at home. I don't know how I felt about the baby. I seemed to hate it—it was like a heavy weight hanging round my neck; and yet its crying went through me, and I daredn't look at its little hands and face. But I went on to the wood, and I walked about, but there was no water." . . .

Hetty shuddered. She was silent for some moments, and when she began again, it was in a whisper.

"I came to a place where there was lots of chips and turf, and I sat down on the trunk of a tree to think what I should do. And all of a sudden I saw a hole under the nut-tree, like a little grave. And it darted into me like lightning—I'd lay the baby there, and cover it with the grass and the chips. I couldn't kill it any other way. And I'd done it in a minute; and, oh, it cried so, Dinah—I *couldn't* cover it quite up—I thought perhaps somebody 'ud come and take care of it, and then it wouldn't die. And I made haste out of the wood, but I could hear it crying all the while; and when I got out into the fields, it was as if I was held fast—I couldn't go away, for all I wanted so to go. And I sat against the haystack to watch if anybody 'ud come: I was very hungry, and I'd only a bit of bread left; but I couldn't go away. And after ever such a while—hours and hours—the man came—him in a smock-frock, and he looked at me so, I was frightened, and I made haste and went on. I thought he was going to the wood, and would perhaps find the baby. And I went right on, till I came to a village, a long way off from the wood; and I was very sick, and faint, and hungry. I got something to eat there, and bought a loaf. But I was frightened to stay. I heard the baby crying, and thought the other folks heard it too,—and I went on. But I was so tired, and it was getting towards dark. And at last, by the roadside there was a barn—ever such a way off any house—like the barn in Abbot's Close; and I thought I could go in there and hide myself among the hay and straw, and nobody 'ud be likely to come. I went in, and it was half full o' trusses of straw, and there was some hay, too. And I made myself a bed, ever so far behind, where nobody could find me; and I was so tired and weak, I went to sleep. . . . But oh, the baby's crying kept

waking me; and I thought that man as looked at me so was come and laying hold of me. But I must have slept a long while at last, though I didn't know; for when I got up and went out of the barn, I didn't know whether it was night or morning. But it was morning, for it kept getting lighter; and I turned back the way I'd come. I couldn't help it, Dinah; it was the baby's crying made me go: and yet I was frightened to death. I thought that man in the smock-frock 'ud see me, and know I put the baby there. But I went on, for all that: I'd left off thinking about going home—it had gone out o' my mind. I saw nothing but that place in the wood where I'd buried the baby . . . I see it now. O Dinah! shall I allays see it?"

Hetty clung round Dinah, and shuddered again. The silence seemed long before she went on.

"I met nobody, for it was very early, and I got into the wood. . . . I knew the way to the place . . . the place against the nut-tree; and I could hear it crying at every step. . . . I thought it was alive. . . . I don't know whether I was frightened or glad . . . I don't know what I felt. I only know I was in the wood, and heard the cry. I don't know what I felt till I saw the baby was gone. And when I'd put it there, I thought I should like somebody to find it, and save it from dying; but when I saw it was gone, I was struck like a stone, with fear. I never thought o' stirring, I felt so weak. I knew I couldn't run away, and everybody as saw me 'ud know about the baby. My heart went like a stone: I couldn't wish or try for anything; it seemed like as if I should stay there forever, and nothing 'ud ever change. But they came and took me away."

Hetty was silent, but she shuddered again, as if there was still something behind; and Dinah waited, for her heart was so full, that tears must come before words. At last Hetty burst out, with a sob,—

"Dinah, do you think God will take away that crying and the place in the wood, now I've told everything?"

"Let us pray, poor sinner: let us fall on our knees again, and pray to the God of all mercy."

## CHAPTER XLVI.

## THE HOURS OF SUSPENSE.

ON Sunday morning, when the church bells in Stoniton were ringing for morning service, Bartle Massey re-entered Adam's room, after a short absence, and said, —

"Adam, here's a visitor wants to see you."

Adam was seated with his back towards the door, but he started up and turned round instantly, with a flushed face and an eager look. His face was even thinner and more worn than we have seen it before, but he was washed and shaven this Sunday morning.

"Is it any news?" he said.

"Keep yourself quiet, my lad," said Bartle; "keep quiet. It's not what you're thinking of: it's the young Methodist woman come from the prison. She's at the bottom o' the stairs, and wants to know if you think well to see her, for she has something to say to you about that poor castaway; but she wouldn't come in without your leave, she said. She thought you'd perhaps like to go out and speak to her. These preaching women are not so back'ard commonly," Bartle muttered to himself.

"Ask her to come in," said Adam.

He was standing with his face towards the door, and as Dinah entered, lifting up her mild gray eyes towards him, she saw at once the great change that had come since the day when she had looked up at the tall man in the cottage. There was a trembling in her clear voice as she put her hand into his, and said, —

"Be comforted, Adam Bede: the Lord has not forsaken her."

"Bless you for coming to her," Adam said. "Mr. Massey brought me word yesterday as you was come."

They could neither of them say any more just yet, but stood before each other in silence; and Bartle Massey, too, who had put on his spectacles, seemed transfixed, examining Dinah's face. But he recovered himself first, and said, "Sit down, young woman, sit down," placing the chair for her, and retiring to his old seat on the bed.

"Thank you, friend; I won't sit down," said Dinah, "for I must hasten back: she entreated me not to stay long away. What I came for, Adam Bede, was to pray you to go and see the poor sinner, and bid her farewell. She desires to ask your forgiveness, and it is meet you should see her to-day, rather than in the early morning, when the time will be short.

Adam stood trembling, and at last sank down on his chair again.

"It won't be," he said: "it'll be put off—there'll perhaps come a pardon. Mr. Irwine said there was hope: he said, I needn't quite give it up."

"That's a blessed thought to me," said Dinah, her eyes filling with tears. "It's a fearful thing hurrying her soul away so fast."

"But let what will be," she added, presently, "you will surely come, and let her speak the words that are in her heart. Although her poor soul is very dark, and discerns little beyond the things of the flesh, she is no longer hard: she is contrite—she has confessed all to me. The pride of her heart has given way, and she leans on me for help, and desires to be taught. This fills me with trust; for I cannot but think that the brethren sometimes err in measuring the Divine love by the sinner's knowledge. She is going to write a letter to the friends at the Hall Farm for me to give them when she is gone; and when I told her you were here, she said, 'I should like to say good-by to Adam, and ask him to forgive me.' You will come, Adam?—perhaps you will even now come back with me."

"I can't," Adam said: "I can't say good-by, while there's any hope. I'm listening, and listening—I can't think of nothing but that. It can't be as she'll die that shameful death—I can't bring my mind to it."

He got up from his chair again, and looked away out of the window while Dinah stood with compassionate patience. In a minute or two he turned round and said, —

"I *will* come, Dinah . . . to-morrow morning . . . if it must be. I may have more strength to bear it, if I know it *must* be. Tell her, I forgive her; tell her I will come—at the very last."

"I will not urge you against the voice of your own heart," said Dinah. "I must hasten back to her, for it is wonderful how she clings now, and was not willing to let me out of her sight. She used never to make any return to my affection before, but now tribulation has opened her heart. Farewell,



Adam: our heavenly Father comfort you, and strengthen you to bear all things." Dinah put out her hand, and Adam pressed it in silence.

Bartle Massey was getting up to lift the stiff latch of the door for her, but before he could reach it, she had said, gently, "Farewell, friend," and was gone, with her light step, down the stairs.

"Well," said Bartle, taking off his spectacles, and putting them into his pocket, "if there must be women to make trouble in the world, it's but fair there should be women to be comforters under it; and she's one—she's one. It's a pity she's a Methodist; but there's no getting a woman without some foolishness or other."

Adam never went to bed that night: the excitement of suspense, heightening with every hour that brought him nearer the fatal moment, was too great; and in spite of his entreaties, in spite of his promises that he would be perfectly quiet, the schoolmaster watched too.

"What does it matter to me, lad?" Bartle said: "a night's sleep more or less? I shall sleep long enough, by and by, underground. Let me keep thee company in trouble while I can."

It was a long and dreary night in that small chamber. Adam would sometimes get up, and tread backwards and forwards along the short space from wall to wall; then he would sit down and hide his face, and no sound would be heard but the ticking of the watch on the table, or the falling of a cinder from the fire which the schoolmaster carefully tended. Sometimes he would burst out into vehement speech,—

"If I could ha' done anything to save her—if my bearing anything would ha' done any good . . . but t' have to sit still, and know it, and do nothing . . . it's hard for a man to bear . . . and to think o' what might ha' been now, if it hadn't been for *him*. . . . O God, it's the very day we should ha' been married."

"Ay, my lad," said Bartle, tenderly, "it's heavy—it's heavy. But you must remember this: when you thought of marrying her, you'd a notion she'd got another sort of a nature inside her. You didn't think she could have got hardened in that little while to do what she's done."

"I know—I know that," said Adam. "I thought she was loving and tender-hearted, and wouldn't tell a lie, or act deceitful. How could I think any other way? And if he'd never come near her, and I'd married her, and been loving to

her, and took care of her, she might never ha' done anything bad. What would it ha' signified — my having a bit o' trouble with her? It 'ud ha' been nothing to this."

"There's no knowing, my lad — there's no knowing what might have come. The smart's bad for you to bear now: you must have time — you must have time. But I've that opinion of you, that you'll rise above it all, and be a man again; and there may good come out of this that we don't see."

"Good come out of it!" said Adam, passionately. "That doesn't alter th' evil: *her* ruin can't be undone. I hate that talk o' people, as if there was a way o' making amends for everything. They'd more need be brought to see as the wrong they do can never be altered. When a man's spoiled his fellow-creatur's life, he's no right to comfort himself with thinking good may come out of it: somebody else's good doesn't alter her shame and misery."

"Well, lad, well," said Bartle, in a gentle tone, strangely in contrast with his usual poremptoriness and impatience of contradiction, "it's likely enough I talk foolishness: I'm an old fellow, and it's a good many years since I was in trouble myself. It's easy finding reasons why other folks should be patient."

"Mr. Massey," said Adam, penitently, "I'm very hot and hasty. I owe you something different; but you mustn't take it ill of me."

"Not I, lad — not I."

So the night wore on in agitation, till the chill dawn and the growing light brought the tremulous quiet that comes on the brink of despair. There would soon be no more suspense.

"Let us go to the prison now, Mr. Massey," said Adam, when he saw the hand of his watch at six. "If there's any news come, we shall hear about it."

The people were astir already, moving rapidly, in one direction, through the streets. Adam tried not to think where they were going, as they hurried past him in that short space between his lodging and the prison gates. He was thankful when the gates shut him in from seeing those eager people.

No; there was no news come — no pardon — no reprieve.

Adam lingered in the court half an hour before he could bring himself to send word to Dinah that he was come. But a voice caught his ear: he could not shut out the words.

"The cart is to set off at half-past seven."

It must be said — the last good-by: there was no help.

In ten minutes from that time, Adam was at the door of

the cell. Dinah had sent him word that she could not come to him, she could not leave Hetty one moment; but Hetty was prepared for the meeting.

He could not see her when he entered, for agitation deadened his senses, and the dim cell was almost dark to him. He stood a moment after the door closed behind him, trembling and stupefied.

But he began to see through the dimness — to see the dark eyes lifted up to him once more, but with no smile in them, O God, how sad they looked! The last time they had met his was when he parted from her with his heart full of joyous, hopeful love, and they looked out with a tearful smile from a pink, dimpled, childish face. The face was marble now; the sweet lips were pallid and half-open, and quivering; the dimples were all gone — all but one, that never went; and the eyes — O! the worst of all was the likeness they had to Hetty's. They were Hetty's eyes looking at him with that mournful gaze, as if she had come back to him from the dead to tell him of her misery.

She was clinging close to Dinah; her cheek was against Dinah's. It seemed as if her last faint strength and hope lay in that contact; and the pitying love that shone out from Dinah's face looked like a visible pledge of the Invisible Mercy.

When the sad eyes met — when Hetty and Adam looked at each other, she felt the change in *him* too, and it seemed to strike her with fresh fear. It was the first time she had seen any being whose face seemed to reflect the change in herself: Adam was a new image of the dreadful past and the dreadful present. She trembled more as she looked at him.

"Speak to him, Hetty," Dinah said; "tell him what is in your heart."

Hetty obeyed her, like a little child.

"Adam . . . I'm very sorry . . . I behaved very wrong to you . . . will you forgive me . . . before I die?"

Adam answered with a half-sob: "Yes, I forgive thee, Hetty: I forgave thee long ago."

It had seemed to Adam as if his brain would burst with the anguish of meeting Hetty's eyes in the first moments; but the sound of her voice uttering these penitent words touched a chord which had been less strained; there was a sense of relief from what was becoming unbearable, and the rare tears came — they had never come before, since he had hung on Seth's neck in the beginning of his sorrow.

Hetty made an involuntary movement towards him; some of the love that she had once lived in the midst of was come near her again. She kept hold of Dinah's hand, but she went up to Adam and said, timidly, —

"Will you kiss me again, Adam, for all I've been so wicked?"

Adam took the blanched wasted hand she put out to him, and they gave each other the solemn unspeakable kiss of a lifelong parting.

"And tell him," Hetty said, in rather a stronger voice, "tell him . . . for there's nobody else to tell him . . . as I went after him and couldn't find him . . . and I hated him and cursed him once . . . but Dinah says, I should forgive him . . . and I try . . . for else God won't forgive me."

There was a noise at the door of the cell now — the key was being turned in the lock, and when the door opened, Adam saw indistinctly that there were several faces there: he was too agitated to see more — even to see that Mr. Irwine's face was one of them. He felt that the last preparations were beginning, and he could stay no longer. Room was silently made for him to depart, and he went to his chamber in loneliness, leaving Bartle Massey to watch and see the end.

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE LAST MOMENT.

It was a sight that some people remembered better even than their own sorrows — the sight in that gray clear morning, when the fatal cart with the two young women in it was descried by the waiting watching multitude, cleaving its way towards the hideous symbol of a deliberately-inflicted sudden death.

All Stouiton had heard of Dinah Morris, the young Methodist woman who had brought the obstinate criminal to confess, and there was as much eagerness to see her as to see the wretched Hetty.

But Dinah was hardly conscious of the multitude. When Hetty had caught sight of the vast crowd in the distance, she had clutched Dinah convulsively.

"Close your eyes, Hetty," Dinah said, "and let us pray without ceasing to God."

And in a low voice, as the cart went slowly along through the midst of the gazing crowd, she poured forth her soul with the wrestling intensity of a last pleading, for the trembling creature that clung to her and clutched her as the only visible sign of love and pity.

Dinah did not know that the crowd was silent, gazing at her with a sort of awe—she did not even know how near they were to the fatal spot, when the cart stopped, and she shrank appalled at a loud shout hideous to her ear, like a vast yell of demons. Hetty's shriek mingled with the sound, and they clasped each other in mutual horror.

But it was not a shout of execration—not a yell of exultant cruelty.

It was a shout of sudden excitement at the appearance of a horseman cleaving the crowd at full gallop. The horse is hot and distressed, but answers to the desperate spurring; the rider looks as if his eyes were glazed by madness, and he saw nothing but what was unseen by others. See, he has something in his hand—he is holding it up as if it were a signal.

The Sheriff knows him: it is Arthur Donnithorne, carrying in his hand a hard-won release from death.

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## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### ANOTHER MEETING IN THE WOOD.

THE next day, at evening, two men were walking from opposite points towards the same scene, drawn thither by a common memory. The scene was the Grove by Donnithorne Chase: you know who the men were.

The old Squire's funeral had taken place that morning, the will had been read, and now in the first breathing-space, Arthur Donnithorne had come out for a lonely walk, that he might look fixedly at the new future before him, and confirm himself in a sad resolution. He thought he could do that best in the Grove.

Adam, too, had come from Stoniton on Monday evening, and to-day he had not left home, except to go to the family at the Hall Farm, and tell them everything that Mr. Irwine

had left untold. He had agreed with the Poyzers that he would follow them to their new neighborhood, wherever that might be; for he meant to give up the management of the woods, and, as soon as it was practicable, he would wind up his business with Jonathan Burge, and settle with his mother and Seth in a home within reach of the friends to whom he felt bound by a mutual sorrow.

"Seth and me are sure to find work," he said. "A man that's got our trade at his finger ends is at home everywhere; and we must make a new start. My mother won't stand in the way, for she's told me, since I came home, she'd made up her mind to being buried in another parish, if I wished it, and if I'd be more comfortable elsewhere. It's wonderful how quiet she's been ever since I came back. It seems as if the very greatness o' the trouble had quieted and calmed her. We shall all be better in a new country; though there's some I shall be loath to leave behind. But I won't part from you and yours, if I can help it, Mr. Poyser. Trouble's made us kin."

"Ay, lad," said Martin. "We'll go out o' hearing o' that man's name. But I doubt we shall ne'er go far enough for folks not to find out as we've got them belonging to us as are transported o'er the seas, and were liked to be hanged. We shall have that flyin' up in our faces, and our children's after us."

That was a long visit to the Hall Farm, and drew too strongly on Adam's energies for him to think of seeing others, or re-entering on his old occupations till the morrow. "But to-morrow," he said to himself, "I'll go to work again. I shall learn to like it again some time, maybe; and it's right whether I like it or not."

This evening was the last he would allow to be absorbed by sorrow: suspense was gone now, and he must bear the unalterable. He was resolved not to see Arthur Donnithorne again, if it were possible to avoid him. He had no message to deliver from Hetty now, for Hetty had seen Arthur; and Adam distrusted himself: he had learned to dread the violence of his own feeling. That word of Mr. Irwine's—that he must remember what he had felt after giving the last blow to Arthur in the Grove—had remained with him.

These thoughts about Arthur, like all thoughts that are charged with strong feeling, were continually recurring, and they always called up the image of the Grove—of that spot under the over-arching boughs where he had caught sight of

the two bending figures, and had been possessed by sudden rage.

"I'll go and see it again to-night for the last time," he said; "it'll do me good; it'll make me feel over again what I felt when I'd knocked him down. I felt what poor empty work it was, as soon as I'd done it, *before* I began to think he might be dead."

In this way it happened that Arthur and Adam were walking towards the same spot at the same time.

Adam had on his working-dress again, now, — for he had thrown off the other with a sense of relief as soon as he came home; and if he had had the basket of tools over his shoulder, he might have been taken, with his pale wasted face, for the spectre of the Adam Bede who entered the Grove on that August evening eight months ago. But he had no basket of tools, and he was not walking with the old erectness, looking keenly round him; his hands were thrust in his side pockets, and his eyes rested chiefly on the ground. He had not long entered the Grove, and now he paused before a beech. He knew that tree well; it was the boundary mark of his youth — the sign, to him, of the time when some of his earliest, strongest feelings had left him. He felt sure they would never return. And yet, at this moment, there was a stirring of affection at the remembrance of that Arthur Donnithorne whom he had believed in before he had come up to this beech eight months ago. It was affection for the dead: *that* Arthur existed no longer.

He was disturbed by the sound of approaching footsteps, but the beech stood at a turning in the road, and he could not see who was coming, until the tall slim figure in deep mourning suddenly stood before him at only two yards' distance. They both started, and looked at each other in silence. Often, in the last fortnight, Adam had imagined himself as close to Arthur as this, assailing him with words that should be as harrowing as the voice of remorse, forcing upon him a just share in the misery he had caused; and often, too, he had told himself that such a meeting had better not be. But in imagining the meeting he had always seen Arthur, as he had met him on that evening in the Grove, florid, careless, light of speech; and the figure before him touched him with the signs of suffering. Adam knew what suffering was — he could not lay a cruel finger on a bruised man. He felt no impulse that he needed to resist: silence was more just than reproach. Arthur was the first to speak.

"Adam," he said, quietly, "it may be a good thing that we have met here, for I wished to see you. I should have asked to see you to-morrow."

He paused, but Adam said nothing.

"I know it is painful to you to meet me," Arthur went on, "but it is not likely to happen again for years to come."

"No, sir," said Adam, coldly, "that was what I meant to write to you to-morrow, as it would be better all dealings should be at an end between us, and somebody else put in my place."

Arthur felt the answer keenly, and it was not without an effort that he spoke again.

"It was partly on that subject I wished to speak to you. I don't want to lessen your indignation against me, or ask you to do anything for my sake. I only wish to ask you if you will help me to lessen the evil consequences of the past, which is unchangeable. I don't mean consequences to myself, but to others. It is but little I can do, I know. I know the worst consequences will remain; but something may be done, and you can help me. Will you listen to me patiently?"

"Yes, sir," said Adam, after some hesitation; "I'll hear what it is. If I can help to mend anything, I will. Auger 'ull mend nothing, I know. We've had enough o' that."

"I was going to the Hermitage," said Arthur. "Will you go there with me and sit down? We can talk better there."

The Hermitage had never been entered since they left it together, for Arthur had locked up the key in his desk. And now, when he opened the door, there was the candle burnt out in the socket; there was the chair in the same place where Adam remembered sitting; there was the waste-paper basket full of scraps, and deep down in it, Arthur felt in an instant, there was the little pink silk handkerchief. It would have been painful to enter this place if their previous thoughts had been less painful.

They sat down opposite each other in the old places, and Arthur said, "I'm going away, Adam; I'm going into the army."

Poor Arthur felt that Adam ought to be affected by this announcement—ought to have a movement of sympathy towards him. But Adam's lips remained firmly closed, and the expression of his face unchanged.

"What I want to say to you," Arthur continued, "is this: one of my reasons for going away is, that no one else may



leave Hayslope — may leave their home on my account. I would do anything, there is no sacrifice I would not make, to prevent any further injury to others through my — through what has happened."

Arthur's words had precisely the opposite effect to that he had anticipated. Adam thought he perceived in them that notion of compensation for irretrievable wrong, that self-soothing attempt to make evil bear the same fruits as good, which most of all roused his indignation. He was as strongly impelled to look painful facts right in the face as Arthur was to turn away his eyes from them. Moreover, he had the wakeful suspicious pride of a poor man in the presence of a rich man. He felt his old severity returning as he said, —

"The time's past for that, sir. A man should make sacrifices to keep clear of doing a wrong; sacrifices won't undo it when it's done. When people's feelings have got a deadly wound, they can't be cured with favors."

"Favors!" said Arthur, passionately; "no; how can you suppose I meant that? But the Poyzers — Mr. Irvine tells me the Poyzers mean to leave the place where they have lived so many years — for generations. Don't you see, as Mr. Irvine does, that if they could be persuaded to overcome the feeling that drives them away, it would be much better for them in the end to remain on the old spot, among the friends and neighbors who know them?"

"That's true," said Adam, coldly. "But then, sir, folks's feelings are not so easily overcome. It'll be hard for Martin Poyser to go to a strange place, among strange faces, when he's been bred up on the Hall Farm, and his father before him; but then it 'ud be harder for a man with his feelings to stay. I don't see how the thing's to be made any other than hard. There's a sort o' damage, sir, that can't be made up for."

Arthur was silent some moments. In spite of other feelings, dominant in him this evening, his pride winced under Adam's mode of treating him. Wasn't he himself suffering? Was not he too obliged to renounce his most cherished hopes? It was now as it had been eight months ago. Adam was forcing Arthur to feel more intensely the irrevocableness of his own wrong-doing; he was presenting the sort of resistance that was the most irritating to Arthur's eager, ardent nature. But his anger was subdued by the same influence that had subdued Adam's when they first confronted each other — by the marks of suffering in a long familiar face. The

momentary struggle ended in the feeling that he could bear a great deal from Adam, to whom he had been the occasion of bearing so much; but there was a touch of pleading, boyish vexation in his tone as he said, —

"But people may make injuries worse by unreasonable conduct — by giving way to anger and satisfying that for the moment, instead of thinking what will be the effect in the future.

"If I were going to stay here and act as landlord," he added, presently, with still more eagerness — "if I were careless about what I've done — what I've been the cause of, you would have some excuse, Adam, for going away and encouraging others to go. You would have some excuse then for trying to make the evil worse. But when I tell you I'm going away for years — when you know what that means for me, how it cuts off every plan of happiness I've ever formed — it is impossible for a sensible man like you to believe that there is any real ground for the Poysers refusing to remain. I know their feeling about disgrace, — Mr. Irwine has told me all; but he is of opinion that they might be persuaded out of this idea that they are disgraced in the eyes of their neighbors, and that they can't remain on my estate, if you would join him in his efforts, — if you would stay yourself, and go on managing the old woods."

Arthur paused a moment, and then added, pleadingly, "You know that's a good work to do for the sake of other people, besides the owner. And you don't know but that they may have a better owner soon, whom you will like to work for. If I die, my cousin Tradgett will have the estate, and take my name. He is a good fellow."

Adam could not help being moved: it was impossible for him not to feel that this was the voice of the honest, warm-hearted Arthur whom he had loved and been proud of in old days; but nearer memories would not be thrust away. He was silent; yet Arthur saw an answer in his face that induced him to go on, with growing earnestness.

"And then, if you would talk to the Poysers — if you would talk the matter over with Mr. Irwine — he means to see you to-morrow — and then if you would join your arguments to his to prevail on them not to go. . . . I know, of course, that they would not accept any favor from me: I mean nothing of that kind; but I'm sure they would suffer less in the end. Irwine thinks so too; and Mr. Irwine is to have the chief authority on the estate — he has consented to undertake that,

'They will really be under no man but one whom they respect and like. It would be the same with you, Adam; and it could be nothing but a desire to give me worse pain that could incline you to go.'

Arthur was silent again for a little while, and then said, with some agitation in his voice, —

"I wouldn't act so towards you, I know. If you were in my place and I in yours, I should try to help you to do the best."

Adam made a hasty movement on his chair, and looked on the ground. Arthur went on, —

"Perhaps you've never done anything you've had bitterly to repent of in your life, Adam; if you had, you would be more generous. You would know then that it's worse for me than for you."

Arthur rose from his seat with the last words, and went to one of the windows, looking out and turning his back on Adam, as he continued, passionately, —

"Haven't I loved her too? Didn't I see her yesterday? Sha'n't I carry the thought of her about with me as much as you will? And don't you think you would suffer more if you'd been in fault?"

There was silence for several minutes, for the struggle in Adam's mind was not easily decided. Facile natures, whose emotions have little permanence, can hardly understand how much inward resistance he overcame before he rose from his seat and turned towards Arthur. Arthur heard the movement, and turning round, met the sad but softened look with which Adam said, —

"It's true what you say, sir: I'm hard — it's in my nature. I was too hard with my father, for doing wrong. I've been a bit hard t' everybody but *her*. I felt as if nobody pitied her enough — her suffering out into me so; and when I thought the folks at the Farm were too hard with her, I said I'd never be hard to anybody myself again. But feeling overmuch about her has perhaps made me unfair to you. I've known what it is in my life to repent and feel it's too late: I felt I'd been too harsh to my father when he was gone from me — I feel it now, when I think of him. I've no right to be hard towards them as have done wrong and repent."

Adam spoke these words with the firm distinctness of a man who is resolved to leave nothing unsaid that he is bound to say; but he went on with more hesitation.

"I wouldn't shake hands with you once, sir, when you

asked me — but if you're willing to do it now, for all I refused then" . . .

Arthur's white hand was in Adam's large grasp in an instant, and with that action there was a strong rush, on both sides, of the old, boyish affection.

"Adam," Arthur said, impelled to full confession now, "it would never have happened if I'd known you loved her. That would have helped to save me from it. And I *did* struggle: I never meant to injure her. I deceived you afterwards — and that led on to worse; but I thought it was forced upon me, I thought it was the best thing I could do. And in that letter I told her to let me know if she were in any trouble: don't think I would not have done everything I could. But I was all wrong from the very first, and horrible wrong has come of it. God knows, I'd give my life if I could undo it."

They sat down again opposite each other, and Adam said, tremulously, —

"How did she seem when you left her, sir?"

"Don't ask me, Adam," Arthur said; "I feel sometimes as if I should go mad with thinking of her looks and what she said to me, and then, that I couldn't get a full pardon — that I couldn't save her from that wretched fate of being transported — that I can do nothing for her all those years; and she may die under it, and never know comfort any more."

"Ah, sir," said Adam, for the first time feeling his own pain merged in sympathy for Arthur, "you and me'll often be thinking o' the same thing, when we're a long way off one another. I'll pray God to help you, as I pray him to help me."

"But there's that sweet woman — that Dinah Morris," Arthur said, pursuing his own thoughts, and not knowing what had been the sense of Adam's words, "she says she shall stay with her to the very last moment — till she goes; and the poor thing clings to her as if she found some comfort in her. I could worship that woman; I don't know what I should do if she were not there. Adam, you will see her when she comes back: I could say nothing to her yesterday — nothing of what I felt towards her. Tell her," Arthur went on hurriedly, as if he wanted to hide the emotion with which he spoke, while he took off his chain and watch — "tell her I asked you to give her this in remembrance of me — of the man to whom she is the one source of comfort, when he thinks of . . . I know she doesn't care about such things — or anything else I can give her for its own sake. But she will use the watch — I shall like to think of her using it"

"I'll give it to her, sir," Adam said, "and tell her your words. She told me she should come back to the people at the Hall Farm."

"And you *will* persuade the Poyzers to stay, Adam?" said Arthur, reminded of the subject which both of them had forgotten in the first interchange of revived friendship. "You *will* stay yourself, and help Mr. Irwine to carry out the repairs and improvements on the estate?"

"There's one thing, sir, that perhaps you don't take account of," said Adam, with hesitating gentleness, "and that was what made me hang back longer. You see, it's the same with both me and the Poyzers: if we stay, it's for our own worldly interest, and it looks as if we'd put up with anything for the sake o' that. I know that's what they'll feel, and I can't help feeling a little of it myself. When folks have got an honorable, independent spirit, they don't like to do anything that might make 'em seem base-minded."

"But no one who knows you will think that, Adam: that is not a reason strong enough against a course that is really more generous, more unselfish than the other. And it will be known—it shall be made known, that both you and the Poyzers stayed at my entreaty. Adam, don't try to make things worse for me; I'm punished enough without that."

"No, sir, no," Adam said, looking at Arthur with mournful affection. "God forbid I should make things worse for you. I used to wish I could do it, in my passion;—but that was when I thought you didn't feel enough. I'll stay, sir: I'll do the best I can. It's all I've got to think of now—to do my work well, and make the world a bit better place for them as can enjoy it."

"Then we'll part now, Adam. You will see Mr. Irwine to-morrow, and consult with him about everything."

"Are you going soon, sir?" said Adam.

"As soon as possible—after I've made the necessary arrangements. Good-by, Adam. I shall think of you going about the old place."

"Good-by, sir. God bless you."

The hands were clasped once more, and Adam left the Hermitage, feeling that sorrow was more bearable now hatred was gone.

As soon as the door was closed behind him, Arthur went to the waste-paper basket and took out the little pink silk handkerchief.

## BOOK VI.

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### CHAPTER XLIX.

#### AT THE HALL FARM.

THE first autumnal afternoon sunshine of 1801 — more than eighteen months after that parting of Adam and Arthur in the Hermitage — was on the yard at the Hall Farm, and the bulldog was in one of his most excited moments; for it was that hour of the day when the cows were being driven into the yard for their afternoon milking. No wonder the patient beasts ran confusedly into the wrong places, for the alarming din of the bulldog was mingled with more distant sounds which the timid feminine creatures, with pardonable superstition, imagined also to have some relation to their own movements — with the tremendous crack of the wagoner's whip, the roar of his voice, and the booming thunder of the wagon, as it left the rick-yard empty of its golden load.

The milking of the cows was a sight Mrs. Poyser loved, and at this hour on mild days she was usually standing at the house door, with her knitting in her hands, in quiet contemplation, only heightened to a keener interest when the vicious yellow cow, who had once kicked over a pailful of precious milk, was about to undergo the preventive punishment of having her hinder-legs strapped.

To-day, however, Mrs. Poyser gave but a divided attention to the arrival of the cows, for she was in eager discussion with Dinah, who was stitching Mr. Poyser's shirt-collars, and had borne patiently to have her thread broken three times by Totty pulling at her arm with a sudden insistence that she should look at "Baby," that is, at a large wooden doll with no legs and a long skirt, whose bald head Totty, seated in her small chair at Dinah's side, was caressing and pressing to her fat cheek with much fervor. Totty is larger by more than two years' growth than when you first saw her, and she has on a black frock under her pinafore: Mrs. Poyser too has on a black

gown, which seems to heighten the family likeness between her and Dinah. In other respects there is little outward change now discernible in old friends, or in the pleasant house-place, bright with polished oak and pewter.

"I never saw the like to you, Dinah," Mrs. Poyser was saying, "when you've once took anything into your head: there's no more moving you than the rooted tree. You may say what you like, but I don't believe *that's* religion; for what's the Sermon on the Mount about, as you're so fond o' reading to the boys, but doing what other folks 'ud have you do? But if it was anything unreasonable they wanted you to do, like taking your cloak off and giving it to 'em, or letting 'em slap you i' the face, I dare say you'd be ready enough; it's only when one 'ud have you do what's plain common-sense and good for yourself, as you're obstinate th' other way."

"Nay, dear aunt," said Dinah, smiling slightly as she went on with her work, "I'm sure your wish 'ud be a reason for me to do anything that I didn't feel it was wrong to do."

"Wrong! You drive me past bearing. What is there wrong, I should like to know, i' staying along wi' your own friends, as are th' happier for having you with 'em, an' are willing to provide for you, even if your work didn't more nor pay 'em for the bit o' sparrow's victual y' eat, and the bit o' rag you put on? An' who is it, I should like to know, as you're bound t' help and comfort i' the world more nor your own flesh and blood—an' me th' only aunt you've got above-ground, an' an brought to the brink o' the grave wally every winter as comes, an' there's the ohild as sits beside you 'ull break her little heart when you go, an' the grandfather not been dead a twelvemonth, an' your uncle 'ull miss you so as never was—a-lighting his pipe an' waiting on him, an' now I can trust you wi' the butter, an' have had all the trouble o' teaching you, and there's all the sewing to be done, an' I must have a strange gell out o' 'Treddles'on to do it—an' all because you must go back to that bare heap o' stones as the very crows fly over an' won't stop at."

"Dear aunt Rachel," said Dinah, looking up in Mrs. Poyser's face, "it's your kindness makes you say I'm useful to you. You don't really want me now; for Nancy and Molly are clever at their work, and you're in good health, now, by the blessing of God, and my uncle is of a cheerful countenance again, and you have neighbors and friends not a few—some of them come to sit with my uncle almost daily. In

deed, you will not miss me; and at Snowfield there are brethren and sisters in great need, who have none of those comforts you have around you. I feel that I am called back to those amongst whom my lot was first cast: I feel drawn again towards the hills where I used to be blessed in carrying the word of life to the sinful and desolate."

"You feel! yes," said Mrs. Poyser, returning from a parenthetic glance at the cows. "That's allays the reason I'm to sit down wi', when you've a mind to do anything contrary. What do you want to be preaching for more than you're preaching now? Don't you go off, the Lord knows where, every Sunday a-preaching and praying? an' haven't you got Methodists enow at Treddles'on to go and look at, if church folks's faces are too handsome to please you? an' isn't there them i' this parish as you've got under hand, and they're like enough to make friends wi' Old Harry again as soon as your back's turned? There's that Bessy Cranage — she'll be flaunting i' new finery three weeks after you're gone, I'll be bound: she'll no more go on in her new ways without you, than a dog 'ull stand on its hind-legs when there's nobody looking. But I suppose it doesna matter so much about folks's souls i' this country, else you'd be for staying with your own aunt, for she's none so good but what you might help her to be better."

There was a certain something in Mrs. Poyser's voice just then, which she did not wish to be noticed, so she turned round hastily to look at the clock, and said: "See there! It's tea-time; an' if Martin's i' the rick-yard, he'll like a cup. Here, Totty, my chicken, let mother put your bonnet on, and then you go out into the rick-yard, and see if father's there, and tell him he mustn't go away again without coming t' have a cup o' tea; and tell your brothers to come in too."

Totty trotted off in her flapping bonnet, while Mrs. Poyser set out the bright oak table, and reached down the tea-cups.

"You talk o' them gells Nancy and Molly being clever i' their work," she began again; — "it's fine talking. They're all the same, clever or stupid — one can't trust 'em out o' one's sight a minute. They want somebody's eye on 'em constant if they're to be kept to their work. An' suppose I'm ill again this winter, as I was the winter before last, who's to look after 'em then, if you're gone? An' there's that blessed child — something's sure t' happen to her — they'll let her tumble into the fire, or get at the kettle wi' the boiling lard in't, or some mischief as 'ull lame her for life; an' it'll be all your fault, Dinah."



"Aunt," said Dinah, "I promise to come back to you in the winter if you're ill. Don't think I will ever stay away from you if you're in real want of me. But indeed it is needful for my own soul that I should go away from this life of ease and luxury, in which I have all things too richly to enjoy—at least that I should go away for a short space. No one can know but myself what are my inward needs, and the besetments I am most in danger from. Your wish for me to stay is not a call of duty which I refuse to hearken to because it is against my own desires; it is a temptation that I must resist, lest the love of the creature should become like a mist in my soul shutting out the heavenly light."

"It passes my cunning to know what you mean by ease and luxury," said Mrs. Poyser, as she cut the bread and butter. "It's true there's good victual enough about you, as nobody shall ever say I don't provide enough and to spare, but if there's ever a bit o' odds an' ends as nobody else 'ud eat, you're sure to pick it out . . . but look there! there's Adam Bede a-carrying the little un in. I wonder how it is he's come so early."

Mrs. Poyser hastened to the door for the pleasure of looking at her darling in a new position, with love in her eyes but reproof on her tongue.

"Oh for shame, Totty! Little gells o' five year old should be ashamed to be carried. Why, Adam, she'll break your arm, such a big gell as that; set her down—for shame!"

"Nay, nay," said Adam, "I can lift her with my hand, I've no need to take my arm to it."

Totty, looking as serenely unconscious of remark as a fat white puppy, was set down at the door-place, and the mother enforced her reproof with a shower of kisses.

"You're surprised to see me at this hour o' the day," said Adam.

"Yes, but come in," said Mrs. Poyser, making way for him; "there's no bad news, I hope?"

"No, nothing bad," Adam answered, as he went up to Dinah and put out his hand to her. She had laid down her work and stood up, instinctively, as he approached her. A faint blush died away from her pale cheek as she put her hand in his, and looked up at him timidly.

"It's an errand to you brought me, Dinah," said Adam, apparently unconscious that he was holding her hand all the while; "mother's a bit ailing, and she's set her heart on your coming to stay the night with her, if you'll be so kind. I

told her I'd call and ask you as I came from the village. She overworks herself, and I can't persuade her to have a little girl t' help her. I don't know what's to be done."

Adam released Dinah's hand as he ceased speaking, and was expecting an answer; but before she had opened her lips Mrs. Poyser said, —

"Look there now! I told you there was folks enow t' help i' this parish, wi'out going further off. There's Mrs. Bede getting as old and cas'alty as can be, and she won't let anybody but you go a-nigh her hardly. The folks at Snowfield have learnt by this time to do better wi'out you nor she can."

"I'll put my bonnet on and set off directly, if you don't want anything done first, aunt," said Dinah, folding up her work.

"Yes, I do want something done. I want you t' have your tea, child; it's all ready; and you'll have a cup, Adam, if y' arena in too big a hurry."

"Yes, I'll have a cup, please; and then I'll walk with Dinah. I'm going straight home, for I've got a lot o' timber valuations to write out."

"Why, Adam, lad, are you here?" said Mr. Poyser, entering warm and coatless, with the two black-eyed boys behind him, still looking as much like him as two small elephants are like a large one. "How is it we've got sight o' you so long before foddering-time?"

"I came on an errand for mother," said Adam. "She's got a touch of her old complaint, and she wants Dinah to go and stay with her a bit."

"Well, we'll spare her for your mother a little while," said Mr. Poyser. "But we wonna spare her for anybody else, on'y her husband."

"Husband!" said Marty, who was at the most prosaic and literal period of the boyish mind. "Why, Dinah hasn't got a husband."

"Spare her?" said Mrs. Poyser, placing a seed-cake on the table, and then seating herself to pour out the tea. "But we must spare her; it seems, and not for a husband neither, but for her own megrims. Tommy, what are you doing to your little sister's doll? making the child naughty, when she'd be good if you'd let her. You shanna have a morsel o' cake if you behave so."

Tommy, with true brotherly sympathy, was amusing himself by turning Dolly's skirt over her bald head, and exhibit-

ing her truncated body to the general scorn—an indignity which cut Totty to the heart.

"What do you think Dinah's been a-telling me since dinner-time?" Mrs. Poyser continued, looking at her husband.

"Eh! I'm a poor un at guessing," said Mr. Poyser.

"Why, she means to go back to Snowfield again, and work i' the mill, and starve herself, as she used to do, like a creatur as has got no friends."

Mr. Poyser did not readily find words to express his unpleasant astonishment; he only looked from his wife to Dinah, who had now seated herself beside Totty, as a bulwark against brotherly playfulness, and was busying herself with the children's tea. If he had been given to making general reflections, it would have occurred to him that there was certainly a change come over Dinah, for she never used to change color; but, as it was, he merely observed that her face was flushed at that moment. Mr. Poyser thought she looked the prettier for it: it was a flush no deeper than the petal of a monthly rose. Perhaps it came because her uncle was looking at her so fixedly; but there is no knowing; for just then Adam was saying, with quiet surprise,—

"Why, I hoped Dinah was settled among us for life. I thought she'd given up the notion o' going back to her old country."

"Thought! yes," said Mrs. Poyser; "and so would anybody else ha' thought, as had got their right end up'ards. But I suppose you must be a Methodist to know what a Methodist 'ull do. It's ill guessing what the bats are flying after."

"Why, what have we done to you, Dinah, as you must go away from us?" said Mr. Poyser, still pausing over his tea-cup. "It's like breaking your word, welly; for your aunt never had no thought but you'd make this your home."

"Nay, uncle," said Dinah, trying to be quite calm. "When I first came, I said it was only for a time, as long as I could be of any comfort to my aunt."

"Well, an' who said you'd ever left off being a comfort to me?" said Mrs. Poyser. "If you didna mean to stay wi' me, you'd better never ha' come. Them as ha' never had a cushion don't miss it."

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Poyser, who objected to exaggerated views. "Thes mustna say so; we should ha' been ill off wi'out her, Lady Day was a twelvemont; we mun be thank-

ful for that, whether she stays or no. But I canna think what she mun leave a good home for, to go back int' a country where the land, most on't, isna worth ten shillings an acre, rent and profits."

"Why, that's just the reason she wants to go, as fur as she can give a reason," said Mrs. Poyser. "She says this country's too comfortable, an' there's too much t' eat, an' folks arena miserable enough. And she's going next week: I canna turn her, say what I will. It's allays the way wi' them meek-faced people; you may's well pelt a bag o' feathers as talk to 'em. But I say it isna religion, to be so obstinate — is it now, Adam?"

Adam saw that Dinah was more disturbed than he had ever seen her by any matter relating to herself, and, anxious to relieve her, if possible, he said, looking at her affectionately, —

"Nay, I can't find fault with anything Dinah does. I believe her thoughts are better than our guesses, let 'em be what they may. I should ha' been thankful for her to stay among us; but if she thinks well to go, I wouldn't cross her, or make it hard to her by objecting. We owe her something different to that."

As it often happens, the words intended to relieve her were just too much for Dinah's susceptible feelings at this moment. The tears came into the gray eyes too fast to be hidden; and she got up hurriedly, meaning it to be understood that she was going to put on her bonnet.

"Mother, what's Dinah crying for?" said Totty. "She isn't a naughty dell."

"Thee'st gone a bit too fur," said Mr. Poyser. "We've no right t' interfere with her doing as she likes. An' thee'dst be as angry as could be wi' me, if I said a word against anything she did."

"Because you'd very like be finding fault wi'out reason," said Mrs. Poyser. "But there's reason i' what I say, else I shouldna say it. It's easy talking for them as can't love her so well as her own aunt does. An' me got so used to her! I shall feel as uneasy as a new sheared sheep when she's gone from me. An' to think of her leaving a parish where she's so looked on. There's Mr. Irwine makes as much of her as if she was a lady, for all her being a Methodist, an' wi' that maggots o' preaching in her head; — God forgi'e me if I'n i' the wrong to call it so."

"Ay," said Mr. Poyser, looking jocosely; "but thee dostna tell Adam what he said to thee about it one day. The missis

was saying, Adam, as the preaching was the only fault to be found wi' Dinah, and Mr. Irwine says, 'But you mustn't find fault with her for that, Mrs. Poyser; you forget she's got no husband to preach to. I'll answer for it, you give Poyser many a good sermon.' The parson had thee there," Mr. Poyser added, laughing unctuously. "I told Bartle Massey on it, an' he laughed too."

"Yes, it's a small joke sets men laughing when they sit a-staring at one another with a pipe i' their mouths," said Mrs. Poyser. "Give Bartle Massey his way, and he'd have all the sharpness to himself. If the chaff-cutter had the making of us, we should all be straw, I reckon. Totty, my chicken, go up-stairs to consin Dinah, and see what she's doing, and give her a pretty kiss."

This errand was devised for Totty as a means of checking certain threatening symptoms about the corners of the mouth; for Tominy, no longer expectant of cake, was lifting up his eyelids with his fore-fingers, and turning his eyeballs towards Totty, in a way that she felt to be disagreeably personal.

"You're rare and busy now — eh, Adam?" said Mr. Poyser. "Burge's getting so bad wi' his asthma, it's well if he'll ever do much riding about again."

"Yes, we've got a pretty bit o' building on hand now," said Adam: "what with the repairs on th' estate, and the new houses at Treddles'on."

"I'll bet a penny that new house Burge is building on his own bit o' land is for him and Mary to go to," said Mr. Poyser. "He'll be for laying by business soon, I'll warrant, and be wanting you to take to it all, and pay him so much by th' 'ear. We shall see you living on th' hill before another twelvemont's over."

"Well," said Adam, "I should like t' have the business in my own hands. It isn't as I mind much about getting any more money: we've enough and to spare now, with only our two selves and mother; but I should like t' have my own way about things; I could try plans then, as I can't do now."

"You get on pretty well wi' the new steward, I reckon?" said Mr. Poyser.

"Yes, yes; he's a sensible man enough: understands farming — he's carrying on the draining, and all that, capital. You must go some day towards the Stonyshire side, and see what alterations they're making. But he's got no notion about buildings: you can so seldom get hold of a man as can turn his brains to more nor one thing; it's just as if they

wore blinkers like th' horses, and could see nothing o' one side of 'em. Now, there's Mr. Irwine has got notions o' building more nor most architects; for as for th' architects, they set up to be fine fellows, but the most of 'em don't know where to set a chimney so as it sha'n't be quarrelling with a door. My notion is, a practical builder, that's got a bit o' taste, makes the best architect for common things; and I've ten times the pleasure i' seeing after the work when I've made the plan myself."

Mr. Poyser listened with an admiring interest to Adam's discourse on building; but perhaps it suggested to him that the building of his corn-rick had been proceeding a little too long without the control of the master's eye; for when Adam had done speaking, he got up and said, —

"Well, lad, I'll bid you good-by now, for I'm off to the rick-yard again."

Adam rose too, for he saw Dinah entering, with her bonnet on, and a little basket in her hand, preceded by Totty.

"You're ready, I see, Dinah," Adam said; "so we'll set off, for the sooner I'm at home the better."

"Mother," said Totty, with her treble pipe, "Dinah was saying her prayers and crying ever so."

"Hush, hush," said the mother: "little gells mustn't chatter."

Whereupon the father, shaking with silent laughter, set Totty on the white deal table, and desired her to kiss him. Mr. and Mrs. Poyser, you perceive, had no correct principles of education.

"Come back to-morrow if Mrs. Bede doesn't want you, Dinah," said Mrs. Poyser: "but you can stay, you know, if she's ill."

So, when the good-bys had been said, Dinah and Adam left the Hall Farm together.

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## CHAPTER L.

### IN THE COTTAGE.

ADAM did not ask Dinah to take his arm when they got out into the lane. He had never yet done so, often as they had walked together; for he had observed that she never walked arm-in-arm with Seth, and he thought, perhaps, that

kind of support was not agreeable to her. So they walked apart, though side by side, and the close poke of her little black bonnet hid her face from him.

"You can't be happy, then, to make the Hall Farm your home, Dinah?" Adam said, with a quiet interest of a brother, who has no anxiety for himself in the matter. "It's a pity, seeing they're so fond of you."

"You know, Adam, my heart is as their heart, so far as love for them and care for their welfare goes; but they are in no present need, their sorrows are healed, and I feel that I am called back to my old work, in which I found a blessing that I have missed of late in the midst of too abundant worldly good. I know it is a vain thought to flee from the work that God appoints us, for the sake of finding a greater blessing to our own souls, as if we could choose for ourselves where we shall find the fulness of the Divine Presence, instead of seeking it where alone it is to be found, in loving obedience. But now, I believe, I have a clear showing that my work lies elsewhere — at least for a time. In the years to come, if my aunt's health should fail, or she should otherwise need me, I shall return."

"You know best, Dinah," said Adam. "I don't believe you'd go against the wishes of them that love you, and are akin to you, without a good and sufficient reason in your own conscience. I've no right to say anything about my being sorry: you know well enough what cause I have to put you above every other friend I've got; and if it had been ordered so that you could ha' been my sister, and lived with us all our lives, I should ha' counted it the greatest blessing as could happen to us now; but Seth tells me there's no hope o' that: your feelings are different; and perhaps I'm taking too much upon me to speak about it."

Dinah made no answer, and they walked on in silence for some yards, till they came to the stone stile; where, as Adam had passed through first, and turned round to give her his hand while she mounted the unusually high step, she could not prevent him from seeing her face. It struck him with surprise; for the gray eyes, usually so mild and grave, had the bright uneasy glauce which accompanies suppressed agitation, and the slight flush in her cheeks, with which she had come down-stairs, was heightened to a deep rose-color. She looked as if she were only sister to Dinah. Adam was silent with surprise and conjecture for some moments, and then he said, —

"I hope I've not hurt or displeased you by what I've said, Dinah: perhaps I was making too free. I've no wish different from what you see to be best; and I'm satisfied for you to live thirty mile off, if you think it right. I shall think of you just as much as I do now; for you're bound up with what I can no more help remembering, than I can help my heart beating."

Poor Adam! Thus do men blunder. Dinah made no answer, but she presently said, —

"Have you heard any news from that poor young man, since we last spoke of him?"

Dinah always called Arthur so; she had never lost the image of him as she had seen him in the prison.

"Yes," said Adam. "Mr. Irwine read me part of a letter from him yesterday. It's pretty certain, they say, that there'll be a peace soon, though nobody believes it'll last long; but he says he doesn't mean to come home. He's no heart for it yet; and it's better for others that he should keep away. Mr. Irwine thinks he's in the right not to come: — it's a sorrowful letter. He asks about you and the Poysers, as he always does. There's one thing in the letter cuts me a good deal: — 'You can't think what an old fellow I feel,' he says; 'I make no schemes now. I'm the best when I've a good day's march or fighting before me.'"

"He's of a rash, warm-hearted nature, like Esau, for whom I have always felt great pity," said Dinah. "That meeting between the brothers, where Esau is so loving and generous, and Jacob so timid and distrustful, notwithstanding his sense of the Divine favor, has always touched me greatly. Truly, I have been tempted sometimes to say that Jacob was of a mean spirit. But that is our trial: — we must learn to see the good in the midst of much that is unlovely."

"Ah," said Adam, "I like to read about Moses best, in th' Old Testament. He carried a hard business well through, and died when other folks were going to reap the fruits: a man must have courage to look at his life so, and think what'll come of it after he's dead and gone. A good solid bit o' work lasts: if it's only laying a floor down, somebody's the better for it being done well, besides the man as does it."

They were both glad to talk of subjects that were not personal, and in this way they went on till they passed the bridge across the Willow Brook, when Adam turned round and said, —

"Ah, here's Seth. I thought he'd be home soon. Does he know of you're going, Dinah?"



"Yes, I told him last Sabbath."

Adam remembered now that Seth had come home much depressed on Sunday evening, a circumstance which had been very unusual with him of late, for the happiness he had in seeing Dinah every week seemed long to have outweighed the pain of knowing she would never marry him. This evening he had his habitual air of dreamy benignant contentment, until he came quite close to Dinah, and saw the traces of tears on her delicate eyelids and eyelashes. He gave one rapid glance at his brother; but Adam was evidently quite outside the current of emotion that had shaken Dinah: he wore his every-day look of unexpectant calm. Seth tried not to let Dinah see that he had noticed her face, and only said, —

"I'm thankful you're come, Dinah, for mother's been hungering after the sight of you all day. She began to talk of you the first thing in the morning."

When they entered the cottage, Lisbeth was seated in her arm-chair, too tired with setting out the evening meal, a task she always performed a long time beforehand, to go and meet them at the door as usual, when she heard the approaching footsteps.

"Coom, child, thee't coom at last," she said, when Dinah went towards her. "What dost mane by lavin' me a week, an' ne'er coomin' a-nigh me?"

"Dear friend," said Dinah, taking her hand, "you're not well. If I'd known it sooner, I'd have come."

"An' how's thee t' know if thee dostna coom? Th' lads on'y know what I tell 'em: as long as ye can stir hand and foot the men think ye're hearty. But I'm none so bad, on'y a bit of a cold sets me aclin'. An' th' lads tease me so t' ha' somebody wi' me t' do the work — they make me ache worse wi' talkin'. If thee'dst come and stay wi' me, they'd let me alone. The Poyzers canna want thee so bad as I do. But take thy bonnet off, an' let me look at thee."

Dinah was moving away, but Lisbeth held her fast, while she was taking off her bonnet, and looked at her face, as one looks into a newly-gathered snowdrop, to renew the old impressions of purity and gentleness.

"What's the matter wi' thee?" said Lisbeth, in astonishment; "thee'st been a-cryin'?"

"It's only a grief that'll pass away," said Dinah, who did not wish just now to call forth Lisbeth's remonstrances by disclosing her intention to leave Hayslope. "You shall know about it shortly — we'll talk of it to-night. I shall stay with you to-night."

Lisbeth was pacified by this prospect; and she had the whole evening to talk with Dinah alone; for there was a new room in the cottage, you remember, built nearly two years ago, in the expectation of a new inmate; and here Adam always sat when he had writing to do, or plans to make. Seth sat there too this evening, for he knew his mother would like to have Dinah all to herself.

There were two pretty pictures on the two sides of the wall in the cottage. On one side there was the broad-shouldered, large-featured, hardy old woman, in her blue jacket and buff kerchief, with her dim-eyed anxious looks turned continually on the lily face and the slight form in the black dress that were either moving lightly about in helpful activity, or seated close by the old woman's arm-chair, holding her withered hand, with eyes lifted up towards her to speak a language which Lisbeth understood far better than the Bible or the hymn-book. She would scarcely listen to reading at all to-night. "Nay, nay, shut the book," she said. "We mun talk. I want t' know what thee was cryin' about. Hast got troubles o' thy own, like other folks?"

On the other side of the wall there were the two brothers, so like each other in the midst of their unlikeness: Adam, with knit brows, shaggy hair, and dark vigorous color, absorbed in his "figuring;" Seth, with large rugged features, the close copy of his brother's, but with thin wavy brown hair and blue dreamy eyes, as often as not looking vaguely out of the window instead of at his book, although it was a newly-bought book — Wesley's abridgment of Madame Guyon's life, which was full of wonder and interest for him. Seth had said to Adam, "Can I help thee with anything in here to-night? I don't want to make a noise in the shop."

"No, lad," Adam answered, "there's nothing but what I must do myself. Thee'st got thy new book to read."

And often, when Seth was quite unconscious, Adam, as he paused after drawing a line with his ruler, looked at his brother with a kind smile dawning in his eyes. He knew "th' lad liked to sit full o' thoughts he could give no account of; they'd never come t' anything, but they made him happy;" and in the last year or so, Adam had been getting more and more indulgent to Seth. It was part of that growing tenderness which came from the sorrow at work within him.

For Adam, though you see him quite master of himself, working hard and delighting in his work after his inborn inalienable nature, had not outlived his sorrow — had not

felt it slip from him as a temporary burden, and leave him the same man again. Do any of us? God forbid. It would be a poor result of all our anguish and our wrestling, if we won nothing but our old selves at the end of it — if we could return to the same blind loves, the same self-confident blame, the same light thoughts of human suffering, the same frivolous gossip over blighted human lives, the same feeble sense of that Unknown towards which we have sent forth irrepressible cries in our loneliness. Let us rather be thankful that our sorrow lives in us as an indestructible force, only changing its form, as forces do, and passing from pain into sympathy — the one poor word which includes all our best insight and our best love. Not that this transformation of pain into sympathy had completely taken place in Adam yet: there was still a great remnant of pain, and this he felt would subsist as long as *her* pain was not a memory, but an existing thing, which he must think of as renewed with the light of every new morning. But we get accustomed to mental as well as bodily pain, without, for all that, losing our sensibility to it: it becomes a habit of our lives, and we cease to imagine a condition of perfect ease as possible for us. Desire is chastened into submission; and we are contented with our day when we have been able to bear our grief in silence, and act as if we were not suffering. For it is at such periods that the sense of our lives having visible and invisible relations beyond any of which either our present or prospective self is the centre, grows like a muscle that we are obliged to lean on and exert.

That was Adam's state of mind in this second autumn of his sorrow. His work, as you know, had always been part of his religion, and from very early days he saw clearly that good carpentry was God's will — was that form of God's will that most immediately concerned him; but now there was no margin of dreams for him beyond this daylight reality, no holiday-time in the working-day world; no moment in the distance when duty would take off her iron glove and breast-plate, and clasp him gently into rest. He conceived no picture of the future but one made up of hard-working days such as he lived through, with growing contentment and intensity of interest, every fresh week: love, he thought, could never be anything to him but a living memory — a limb lopped off, but not gone from consciousness. He did not know that the power of loving was all the while gaining new force within him; that the new sensibilities bought by a deep experience

were so many new fibres by which it was possible, nay, necessary to him, that his nature should intertwine with another. Yet he was aware that common affection and friendship were more precious to him than they used to be, — that he clung more to his mother and Seth, and had an unspeakable satisfaction in the sight or imagination of any small addition to their happiness. The Poyzers, too — hardly three or four days passed but he felt the need of seeing them, and interchanging words and looks of friendliness with them: he would have felt this, probably, even if Dinah had not been with them; but he had only said the simplest truth in telling Dinah that he put her above all other friends in the world. Could anything be more natural? For in the darkest moments of memory the thought of her always came as the first ray of returning comfort: the early days of gloom at the Hall Farm had been gradually turned into soft moonlight by her presence; and in the cottage, too, — for she had come at every spare moment to soothe and cheer poor Lisbeth, who had been stricken with a fear that subdued even her querulousness, at the sight of her darling Adam's grief-worn face. He had become used to watching her light quiet movements, her pretty loving ways to the children, when he went to the Hall Farm; to listen for her voice as for a recurrent music; to think everything she said and did was just right, and could not have been better. In spite of his wisdom, he could not find fault with her for her over-indulgence of the children, who had managed to convert Dinah the preacher, before whom a circle of rough men had often trembled a little, into a convenient household slave; though Dinah herself was rather ashamed of this weakness, and had some inward conflict as to her departure from the precepts of Solomon. Yes, there was one thing that might have been better; she might have loved Seth and consented to marry him. He felt a little vexed, for his brother's sake; and he could not help thinking regretfully how Dinah, as Seth's wife, would have made their home as happy as it could be for them all — how she was the one being that would have soothed their mother's last days into peacefulness and rest.

"It's wonderful she doesn't love th' lad," Adam had said sometimes to himself; "for anybody 'ud think he was just cut out for her. But her heart's so taken up with other things. She's one o' those women that feel no drawing towards having a husband and children o' their own. She thinks she should be filled up with her own life then; and

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she's been used so to living in other folks's cares, she can't bear the thought of her heart being shut up from 'em. I see how it is, well enough. She's cut out o' different stuff from most women: I saw that long ago. She's never easy but when she's helping somebody, and marriage 'ud interfere with her ways,—that's true. I've no right to be contriving and thinking it 'ud be better if she'd have Seth, as if I was wiser than she is;—or than God either, for He made her what she is, and that's one o' the greatest blessings I've ever had from His hands, and others besides me."

This self-reproof had recurred strongly to Adam's mind, when he gathered from Dinah's face that he had wounded her by referring to his wish that she had accepted Seth, and so he had endeavored to put into the strongest words his confidence in her decision as right—his resignation even to her going away from them, and ceasing to make part of their life otherwise than by living in their thoughts, if that separation were chosen by herself. He felt sure she knew quite well enough how much he cared to see her continually—to talk to her with the silent consciousness of a mutual great remembrance. It was not possible she should hear anything but self-renouncing affection and respect in his assurance that he was contented for her to go away; and yet there remained an uneasy feeling in his mind that he had not said quite the right thing—that, somehow, Dinah had not understood him.

Dinah must have risen a little before the sun the next morning, for she was down-stairs about five o'clock. So was Seth; for, through Lisbeth's obstinate refusal to have any woman-helper in the house, he had learned to make himself, as Adam said, "very handy in the housework," that he might save his mother from too great weariness; on which ground I hope you will not think him unmanly, any more than you can have thought the gallant Colonel Bath unmanly when he made the gruel for his invalid sister. Adam, who had sat up late at his writing, was still asleep, and was not likely, Seth said, to be down till breakfast-time. Often as Dinah had visited Lisbeth during the last eighteen months, she had never slept in the cottage since that night after Thias's death, when, you remember, Lisbeth praised her deft movements, and even gave a modified approval to her porridge. But in that long interval Dinah had made great advances in household cleverness; and this morning, since Seth was there to help, she was bent on bringing everything to a pitch of cleanliness and order that would have satisfied her aunt Poyser. The cottage

was far from that standard at present, for Lisbeth's rheumatism had forced her to give up her old habits of diletante scouring and polishing. When the kitchen was to her mind, Dinah went into the new room, where Adam had been writing the night before, to see what sweeping and dusting were needed there. She opened the window and let in the fresh morning air, and the smell of the sweet brier, and the bright low-slanting rays of the early sun, which made a glory about her pale face and pale auburn hair as she held the long brush, and swept, singing to herself in a very low tone — like a sweet summer murmur that you have to listen for very closely — one of Charles Wesley's hymns: —

"Eternal Beam of Light Divine,  
Fountain of unexhausted love,  
In whom the Father's glories shine,  
Through earth beneath and heaven above;

Jesus! the weary wanderer's rest,  
Give me thy easy yoke to bear;  
With steadfast patience arm my breast,  
With spotless love and holy fear.

Speak to my warring passions, 'Peace!'  
Say to my trembling heart, 'Be still!'  
Thy power my strength and fortress is,  
For all things serve thy sovereign will."

She laid by the brush and took up the duster; and if you had ever lived in Mrs. Poyser's household, you would know how the duster behaved in Dinah's hand — how it went into every small corner, and on every ledge in and out of sight — how it went again and again round every bar of the chairs, and every leg, and under and over everything that lay on the table, till it came to Adam's papers and rulers, and the open desk near them. Dinah dusted up to the very edge of these, and then hesitated, looking at them with a longing but timid eye. It was painful to see how much dust there was among them. As she was looking in this way, she heard Seth's step just outside the open door, towards which her back was turned, and said, raising her clear treble, —

"Seth, is your brother wrathful when his papers are stirred?"

"Yes, very, when they are not put back in the right places," said a deep strong voice, not Seth's.

It was as if Dinah had put her hands unawares on a vibrating chord; she was shaken with an intense thrill, and for the

instant felt nothing else; then she knew her cheeks were glowing, and dared not look round, but stood still, distressed because she could not say good-morning in a friendly way. Adam, finding that she did not look round so as to see the smile on his face, was afraid she had thought him serious about his wrathfulness, and went up to her, so that she was obliged to look at him.

"What! you think I'm a cross fellow at home, Dinah?" he said, smilingly.

"Nay," said Dinah, looking up with timid eyes, "not so. But you might be put about by finding things meddled with; and even the man Moses, the meekest of men, was wrathful sometimes."

"Come, then," said Adam, looking at her affectionately, "I'll help you move the things, and put 'em back again, and then they can't get wrong. You're getting to be your aunt's own niece, I see, for particularness."

They began their little task together, but Dinah had not recovered herself sufficiently to think of any remark, and Adam looked at her uneasily. Dinah, he thought, had seemed to disapprove him somehow lately; she had not been so kind and open to him as she used to be. He wanted her to look at him, and be as pleased as he was himself with doing this bit of playful work. But Dinah did not look at him—it was easy for her to avoid looking at the tall man; and when at last there was no more dusting to be done, and no further excuse for him to linger near her, he could bear it no longer, and said, in rather a pleading tone, —

"Dinah, you're not displeased with me for anything, are you? I've not said or done anything to make you think ill of me?"

The question surprised her, and relieved her by giving a new course to her feeling. She looked up at him now, quite earnestly, almost with the tears coming, and said, —

"Oh, no, Adam! how could you think so?"

"I couldn't bear you not to feel as much a friend to me as I do to you," said Adam. "And you don't know the value I set on the very thought of you, Dinah. That was what I meant yesterday, when I said I'd be content for you to go, if you thought right. I meant, the thought of you was worth so much to me, I should feel I ought to be thankful, and not grumble, if you see right to go away. You know I do mind parting with you, Dinah?"

"Yes, dear friend," said Dinah, trembling, but trying to

speak calmly, "I know you have a brother's heart towards me, and we shall often be with one another in spirit; but at this season I am in heaviness through manifold temptations: you must not mark me. I feel called to leave my kindred for a while; but it is a trial: the flesh is weak."

Adam saw that it pained her to be obliged to answer.

"I hurt you by talking about it, Dinah," he said: "I'll say no more. Let's see if Seth's ready with breakfast now."

That is a simple scene, reader. But it is almost certain that you, too, have been in love—perhaps, even, more than once, though you may not choose to say so to all your feminine friends. If so, you will no more think the slight words, the timid looks, the tremulous touches, by which two human souls approach each other gradually, like two little quivering rain-streams, before they mingle into one—you will no more think these things trivial than you will think the first-detected signs of coming spring trivial, though they be but a faint, indescribable something in the air and in the song of the birds, and the tiniest perceptible budding on the hedge-row branches. Those slight words and looks and touches are part of the soul's language; and the finest language, I believe, is chiefly made up of unimposing words, such as "light," "sound," "stars," "music,"—words really not worth looking at, or hearing, in themselves, any more than "chips" or "sawdust:" it is only that they happen to be the signs of something unspeakably great and beautiful. I am of opinion that love is a great and beautiful thing too; and if you agree with me, the smallest signs of it will not be chips and sawdust to you: they will rather be like those little words, "light" and "music," stirring the long-winding fibres of your memory, and enriching your present with your most precious past.

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## CHAPTER LI.

### SUNDAY MORNING.

LISBETH'S touch of rheumatism could not be made to appear serious enough to detain Dinah another night from the Hall Farm, now she had made up her mind to leave her aunt so soon; and at evening the friends must part. "For a long while," Dinah had said; for she had told Lisbeth of her resolve.



"Then it'll be for all my life, an' I shall ne'er see thee again," said Lisbeth. "Long while! I'n got no long while t' live. An' I shall be took bad an' die, an' thee canst ne'er come a-nigh me, an' I shall die a-longing for thee."

That had been the key-note of her wailing talk all day; for Adam was not in the house, and so she put no restraint on her complaining. She had tried poor Dinah by returning again and again to the question, why she must go away; and refusing to accept reasons, which seemed to her nothing but whim and "contrairiness;" and still more, by regretting that she "couldna ha' one o' the lads," and be her daughter.

"Thee couldstna put up wi' Seth," she said: "he isna cliver enough for thee, happen; but he'd ha' been very good t' thee—he's as handy as can be at doin' tlings for me when I'm bad; an' he's as fond o' the Bible an' chappellin' as thee art thyssen. But happen, thee'dst like a husband better as isna just the cut o' thyssen: the runnin' brook isna athirst for th' rain. Adam 'ud ha' done for thee—I know he would; an' he might come t' like thee well enough, if thee'dst stop. But he's as stubborn as th' iron bar—there's no bending him no way but's own. But he'd be a fine husband for anybody, be they who they will, so looked-on an' so cliver as he is. And he'd be rare an' lovin': it does me good on'y a look o' the lad's eye, when he means kind tow'rt me."

Dinah tried to escape from Lisbeth's closest looks and questions by finding little tasks of housework, that kept her moving about; and as soon as Seth came home in the evening she put on her bonnet to go. It touched Dinah keenly to say the last good-by, and still more to look round on her way across the fields, and see the old woman still standing at the door, gazing after her till she must have been the faintest speck in the dim aged eyes. "The God of love and peace be with them," Dinah prayed, as she looked back from the last stile. "Make them glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted them, and the years wherein they have seen evil. It is thy will that I should part from them; let me have no will but thine."

Lisbeth turned into the house at last, and sat down in the workshop near Seth, who was busying himself there with fitting some bits of turned wood he had brought from the village, into a small workbox which he meant to give to Dinah before she went away.

"Thee't see her again o' Sunday afore she goes," were her first words. "If thee wast good for anything, thee'dst make

her come in again o' Sunday night wi' thee, and see me once more."

"Nay, mother," said Seth, "Dinah 'nd be sure to come again if she saw right to come. I should have no need to persuade her. She only thinks it 'ud be troubling thee for nought, just to come in to say good-by over again."

"She'd ne'er go away, I know, if Adam 'ud be fond on her an' marry her; but everything's so contrairy," said Lisbeth, with a burst of vexation.

Seth paused a moment, and looked up, with a slight blush, at his mother's face. "What! has she said anything o' that sort to thee, mother?" he said, in a lower tone.

"Said? nay, she'll say nothin.' It's on'y the men as have to wait till folks say things afore they find 'em out."

"Well, but what makes thee think so, mother? What's put it into thy head?"

"It's no matter what's put it into my head: my head's none so hollow as it must get in, an' nought to put it there. I know she's fond on him, as I know th' wind's comin' in at the door, an' that's anooft. An' he might be willin' to marry her if he know'd she's fond on him, but he'll ne'er think on't if somebody doesna put it into's head."

His mother's suggestion about Dinah's feeling towards Adam was not quite a new thought to Seth, but her last words alarmed him, lest she should herself undertake to open Adam's eyes. He was not sure about Dinah's feeling, and he thought he *was* sure about Adam's.

"Nay, mother, nay," he said, earnestly, "thee mustna think o' speaking o' such things to Adam. Thee'st no right to say what Dinah's feelings are if she hasna told thee; and it 'ud do nothing but mischief to say such things to Adam: he feels very grateful and affectionate toward Dinah, but he's no thoughts towards her that 'ud incline him to make her his wife; and I don't believe Dinah 'ud marry him either. I don't think she'll marry at all."

"Eh," said Lisbeth, impatiently. "Thee think'st so 'cause she wouldna ha' thee. She'll ne'er marry thee; thee mightst as well like her t' ha' thy brother."

Seth was hurt. "Mother," he said, in a remonstrating tone, "don't think that of me. I should be as thankful t' have her for a sister as thee wouldst t' have her for a daughter. I've no more thoughts about myself in that thing, and I shall take it hard if ever thee say'st it again."

"Well, well, then thee shouldstna cross me wi' sayin' things arena as I say they are."

"But, mother," said Seth, "thee'dst be doing Dinah a wrong by telling Adam what thee think'st about her. It 'ud do nothing but mischief; for it 'ud make Adam uneasy if he doesna feel the same to her. And I'm pretty sure he feels nothing o' the sort."

"Eh' donna tell me what thee't sure on; thee know'st nought about it. What's he allays goin' to the l'oyers' for, if he didna want t' see her? He goes twice where he used t' go once. Happen he knowsna as he wants t' see her; he knowsna as I put salt in's broth, but he'd miss it pretty quick if it warna there. He'll ne'er think o' marrying if it isna put into's head; an' if thee'dst any love for thy mother, thee'dst put him up to't, an' not let her go away out o' my sight, when I might ha' her to make a bit o' comfort for me afore I go to bed to my old man under the white thorn."

"Nay, mother," said Seth, "thee mustna think me unkind; but I should be going against my conscience if I took upon me to say what Dinah's feelings are. And besides that, I think I should give offence to Adam by speaking to him at all about marrying; and I counsel thee not to do't. Thee may'st be quite deceived about Dinah; nay, I'm pretty sure, by words she said to me last Sabbath, as she's no mind to marry."

"Eh, thee't as contrairy as the rest on 'em. If it war summat I didna want, it 'ud be done fast enough."

Lisbeth rose from the bench at this, and went out of the workshop, leaving Seth in much anxiety lest she should disturb Adam's mind about Dinah. He consoled himself after a time with reflecting that, since Adam's trouble, Lisbeth had been very timid about speaking to him on matters of feeling, and that she would hardly dare to approach this tenderest of all subjects. Even if she did, he hoped Adam would not take much notice of what she said.

Seth was right in believing that Lisbeth would be held in restraint by timidity; and during the next three days, the intervals in which she had an opportunity of speaking to Adam were too rare and short to cause her any strong temptation. But in her long solitary hours she brooded over her regretful thoughts about Dinah, till they had grown very near that point of unmanageable strength when thoughts are apt to take wing out of their secret nest in a startling manner. And on Sunday morning, when Seth went away to chapel at Treddleston, the dangerous opportunity came.

Sunday morning was the happiest time in all the week to

Lisbeth; for as there was no service at Hayslope church till the afternoon, Adam was always at home, doing nothing but reading, an occupation in which she could venture to interrupt him. Moreover, she had always a better dinner than usual to prepare for her sons — very frequently for Adam and herself alone, Seth being often away the entire day; and the smell of the roast-meat before the clear fire in the clean kitchen, the clock ticking in a peaceful Sunday manner, her darling Adam seated near her in his best clothes, doing nothing very important, so that she could go and stroke her hand across his hair if she liked, and see him look up at her and smile, while Gyp, rather jealous, poked his muzzle up between them, — all these things made poor Lisbeth's earthly paradise.

The book Adam most often read on a Sunday morning was his large pictured Bible, and this morning it lay open before him on the round white deal table in the kitchen; for he sat there in spite of the fire, because he knew his mother liked to have him with her, and it was the only day in the week when he could indulge her in that way. You would have liked to see Adam reading his Bible: he never opened it on a week-day, and so he came to it as a holiday book, serving him for history, biography, and poetry. He held one hand thrust between his waistcoat buttons, and the other ready to turn the pages; and in the course of the morning you would have seen many changes in his face. Sometimes his lips moved in semi-articulation — it was when he came to a speech that he could fancy himself uttering, such as Samuel's dying speech to the people; then his eyebrows would be raised, and the corners of his mouth would quiver a little with sad sympathy — something, perhaps old Isaac's meeting with his son, touched him closely; at other times, over the New Testament, a very solemn look would come upon his face, and he would every now and then shake his head in serious assent, or just lift up his hand and let it fall again; and on some mornings, when he read in the Apocrypha, of which he was very fond, the son of Sirach's keen-edged words would bring a delighted smile, though he also enjoyed the freedom of occasionally differing from an Apocryphal writer. For Adam knew the Articles quite well, as became a good churchman.

Lisbeth, in the pauses of attending to her dinner, always sat opposite to him and watched him, till she could rest no longer without going up to him and giving him a caress, to call his attention to her. This morning he was reading the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and Lisbeth had been stand-

ing close by him for some minutes, stroking his hair, which was smoother than usual this morning, and looking down at the large page with silent wonderment at the mystery of letters. She was encouraged to continue this caress, because when she first went up to him, he had thrown himself back in his chair to look at her affectionately and say, "Why, mother, thee look'st rare and hearty this morning. Eh, Gyp wants me t' look at him: he can't abide to think I love thee the best." Lisbeth said nothing, because she wanted to say so many things. And now there was a new leaf to be turned over, and it was a picture — that of the angel seated on the great stone that has been rolled away from the sepulchre. This picture had one strong association in Lisbeth's memory, for she had been reminded of it when she first saw Dinah: and Adam had no sooner turned the page, and lifted the book sideways that they might look at the angel, than she said, "That's her — that's Dinah."

Adam smiled, and, looking more intently at the angel's face, said —

"It is a bit like her; but Dinah's prettier, I think."

"Well, then, if thee think'st her so pretty, why art'st fond on her?"

Adam looked up in surprise. "Why, mother, dost think I don't set store by Dinah?"

"Nay," said Lisbeth, frightened at her own courage, yet feeling that she had broken the ice, and the waters must flow, whatever mischief they might do. "What's th' use o' settin' store by things as are thirty mile off? If thee wast fond enough on her thee wouldstna let her go away."

"But I've no right t' hinder her, if she thinks well," said Adam, looking at his book as if he wanted to go on reading. He foresaw a series of complaints tending to nothing. Lisbeth sat down again in the chair opposite to him, as she said, —

"But she wouldna think well if thee wastna so contrary." Lisbeth dared not venture beyond a vague phrase yet.

"Contrary, mother?" Adam said, looking up again in some anxiety. "What have I done? What dost mean?"

"Why, thee't never look at nothin', nor think o' nothin', but thy figurin' an' thy work," said Lisbeth, half crying. "An' dost think thee canst go on so all thy life, as if thee wast a man cut out o' timber? An' what wnt do when thy mother's gone, an' nobody to take care on thee as thee gett'st a bit o' victual comfortable i' the mornin'?"

"What hast got i' thy mind, mother?" said Adam, vexed at this whimpering. "I canna see what thee't driving at. Is there anything I could do for thee as I don't do?"

"Ay, an' that there is. Thee might'st do as I should ha' somebody wi' me to comfort me a bit, an' wait on me when I'm bad, an' be good to me."

"Well, mother, whose fault is it there isna some tidy body i' th' house t' help thee? It isna by my wish as thee hast a stroke o' work to do. We can afford it—I've told thee often enough. It 'ud be a deal better for us."

"Eh, what's the use o' talking o' tidy bodies, when thee mean'st one o' th' wenches out o' th' village, or somebody from 'Treddles'on as I ne'er set eyes on i' my life? I'd sooner make a shift an' get into my owu coffin afore I die, nor ha' them folks to put me in."

Adam was silent, and tried to go on reading. That was the utmost severity he could show towards his mother on a Sunday morning. But Lisbeth had gone too far now to check herself, and after scarcely a minute's quietness she began again.

"Thee mightst know well enough who 'tis I'd like t' ha' wi' me. It isna many folks I send for t' come an' see me, I reckon. An' thee'st had the fetelin' on her times enow."

"Thee mean'st Dinah, mother, I know," said Adam. "But it's no use setting thy mind on what can't be. If Dinah 'ud be willing to stay at Hayslope, it isn't likely she can come away from her aunt's house, where they hold her like a daughter, and where she's more bound than she is to us. If it had been so that she could ha' married Seth, that 'ud ha' been a great blessing to us, but we can't have things just as we like in this life. Thee must try and make up thy mind to do without her."

"Nay, but I cauna ma' up my mind, when she's just cut out for thee; an' nought shall ma' me believe as God didna make her an' send her there o' purpose for thee. What's it sinnify about her bein' a Methody? It 'ud happen wear out on her wi' murryin'."

Adam threw himself back in his chair and looked at his mother. He understood now what she had been aiming at from the beginning of the conversation. It was as unreasonable, impracticable a wish as she had ever urged, but he could not help being moved by so entirely new an idea. The chief point, however, was to chase away the notion from his mother's mind as quickly as possible.

"Mother," he said, gravely, "thee't talking wild. Don't let me hear thee say such things again. It's no good talking o' what can never be. Dinah's not for marrying; she's fixed her heart on a different sort o' life."

"Very like," said Lisbeth, impatiently, "very like she's none for marr'ing, when them as she'd be willin' t' marry wonna ax her. I shouldna ha' been for marr'ing thy feyther if he'd ne'er axed me; an' she's as foud o' thee as e'er I war o' Thias, poor fellow."

The blood rushed to Adam's face, and for a few moments he was not quite conscious where he was: his mother and the kitchen had vanished for him, and he saw nothing but Dinah's face turned up towards his. It seemed as if there were a resurrection of his dead joy. But he woke up very speedily from that dream (the waking was chill and sad); for it would have been very foolish in him to believe his mother's words; she could have no ground for them. He was prompted to express his disbelief very strongly — perhaps that he might call forth the proofs, if there were any to be offered.

"What dost say such things for, mother, when thee'st no foundation for 'em? Thee know'st nothing as gives thee a right to say that."

"Then I knowna nought as gi'es me a right to say as the year's turned, for all I feel it fust thing when I get up i' th' morning. She isna fond o' Seth, I reckon, is she? She doesna want to marry *him*? But I can see as she doesna behave tow'rt thee as she does tow'rt Seth. She makes no more o' Seth's coming a-nigh her nor if he war Gyp, but she's all of a tremble when thee't a-sittin' down by her at breakfast, an a-looking at her. Thee think'st thy mother knows nought, but she war alive afore thee wast born."

"But thee canstna be sure as the trembling means love?" said Adam, anxiously.

"Eh, what else should it mane? It isna hate, I reckon. An' what should she do but love thee? Thee't made to be loved — for where's there a straighter, cliverer man? An' what's it sinnify her bein' a Methody? Its on'y the marigold i' th' parridge."

Adam had thrust his hands in his pockets, and was looking down at the book on the table, without seeing any of the letters. He was trembling like a gold-seeker, who sees the strong promise of gold, but sees in the same moment a sickening vision of disappointment. He could not trust his mother's

insight; she had seen what she wished to see. And yet—and yet, now the suggestion had been made to him, he remembered so many things, very slight things, like the stirring of the water by an imperceptible breeze, which seemed to him some confirmation of his mother's words.

Lisbeth noticed that he was moved. She went on, —

"An' thee't find out as thee't poorly aff when she's gone. Thee't fonder on her nor thee know'st. Thy eyes follow her about, welly as Gyp's follow thee."

Adam could sit still no longer. He rose, took down his hat, and went out into the fields.

The sunshine was on them: that early autumn sunshine which we should know was not summer's, even if there were not the touches of yellow on the lime and chestnut: the Sunday sunshine, too, which has more than autumnal calmness for the working man: the morning sunshine, which still leaves the dew-crystals on the fine gossamer webs in the shadow of the bushy hedgerows.

Adam needed the calm influence: he was amazed at the way in which this new thought of Dinah's love had taken possession of him, with an overmastering power that made all other feelings give way before the impetuous desire to know that the thought was true. Strange, that till that moment the possibility of their ever being lovers had never crossed his mind, and yet now, all his longing suddenly went out towards that possibility; he had no more doubt or hesitation as to his own wishes than the bird that flies towards the opening through which the daylight gleams and the breath of heaven enters.

The autumnal Sunday sunshine soothed him; but not by preparing him with resignation to the disappointment if his mother—if he himself, proved to be mistaken about Dinah: it soothed him by gentle encouragement of his hopes. Her love was so like that calm sunshine that they seemed to make one presence to him, and he believed in them both alike. And Dinah was so bound up with the sad memories of his first passion, that he was not forsaking them, but rather giving them a new sacredness by loving her. Nay, his love for her had grown out of that past: it was the noon of that morning.

But Seth? Would the lad be hurt? Hardly; for he had seemed quite contented of late, and there was no selfish jealousy in him; he had never been jealous of his mother's fondness for Adam. But had he seen anything of what their mother talked about? Adam longed to know this, for he



thought he could trust Seth's observation better than his mother's. He must talk to Seth before he went to see Dinah; and, with this intention in his mind, he walked back to the cottage and said to his mother,—

"Did Seth say anything to thee about when he was coming home? Will he be back to dinner?"

"Ay, lad; he'll be back for a wonder. He isna gone to Treddles'on. He's gone somewhere else a-preachin' and a-prayin'."

"Hast any notion which way he's gone?" said Adam.

"Nay, but he aften goes to th' Common. Thee know'st more o's goings nor I do."

Adam wanted to go and meet Seth, but he must content himself with walking about the near fields and getting sight of him as soon as possible. That would not be for more than an hour to come, for Seth would scarcely be at home much before their dinner-time, which was twelve o'clock. But Adam could not sit down to his reading again, and he sauntered along by the brook and stood leaning against the stiles, with eager, intense eyes, which looked as if they saw something very vividly; but it was not the brook or the willows, not the fields or the sky. Again and again his vision was interrupted by wonder at the strength of his own feeling, at the strength and sweetness of this new love—almost like the wonder a man feels at the added power he finds in himself for an art which he had laid aside for a space. How is it that the poets have said so many fine things about our first love, so few about our later love? Are their first poems their best? or are not those the best which come from their fuller thought, their larger experience, their deeper-rooted affections? The boy's flute-like voice has its own spring charm; but the man should yield a richer, deeper music.

At last, there was Seth, visible at the farthest stile, and Adam hastened to meet him. Seth was surprised, and thought something unusual must have happened: but when Adam came up, his face said plainly enough that it was nothing alarming.

"Where hast been?" said Adam, when they were side by side.

"I've been to the Common," said Seth. "Dinah's been speaking the Word to a little company of hearers at Brimstone's, as they call him. They're folks as never go to church hardly—them on the Common—but they'll go and hear Dinah a bit. She's been speaking with power this forenoon

from the words, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' And there was a little thing happened as was pretty to see. The women mostly bring their children with 'em, but to-day there was one stout curly-headed fellow about three or four year old, that I never saw there before. He was as naughty as could be at the beginnig while I was praying, and while we was singing, but when we all sat down and Dinah began to speak, th' young un stood stock-still all at once, and began to look at her with's mouth open, and presently he ran away from's mother and went up to Dinah, and pulled at her, like a little dog, for her to take notico of him. So Dinah lifted him up and held th' lad on her lap, while she went on speaking; and he was as good as could be till he went to sleep — and the mother cried to see him."

"It's a pity she shouldna be a mother herself," said Adam, "so fond as the children are of her. Dost think she's quite fixed against marrying, Seth? Dost think nothing 'ud turn her?"

There was something peonliar in his brother's tone, which made Seth steal a glance at his face before he answered.

"It 'ud be wrong of me to say nothing 'ud turn her," he answered. "But if thee mean'st it about myself, I've given up all thoughts as she can ever be *my* wife. She calls me her brother, and that's enough."

"But dost think she might ever get fond enough of anybody else to be willing to marry 'em?" said Adam, rather shyly.

"Well," said Seth, after some hesitation, "it's crossed my mind sometimes o' late as she might; but Dinah 'ud let no fondness for the creature draw her out o' the path as she believed God had marked out for her. If she thought the leading was not from Him, she's not one to be brought under the power of it. And she's allays secmed clear about that — as her work was to minister t' others, and make no home for herself i' this world."

"But suppose," said Adam, earnestly, "suppose there was a man as 'ud let her do just the same and not interfere with her, — she might do a good deal o' what she does now, just as well when she was married as when she was single. Other women of her sort have married — that's to say, not just like her, but women as preached and attended on the sick and needy. There's Mrs. Fletcher as she talks of."

A new light had broken in on Seth. He turned round, and laying his hand on Adam's shoulder, said, "Why, wouldst like her to marry *thee*, brother?"

Adam looked doubtfully at Seth's inquiring eyes, and said, "Wouldst be hurt if she was to be fonder o' me than o' thee?"

"Nay," said Seth, warmly, "how canst think it? Have I felt thy trouble so little, that I shouldna feel thy joy?"

There was silence a few moments as they walked on, and then Seth said, —

"I'd no notion as thee'dst ever think of her for a wife."

"But is it o' any use to think of her?" said Adam — "what dost say? Mother's made me as I hardly know where I am, with what she's been saying to me this forenoon. She says she's sure Dinah feels for me more than common, and 'ud be willing t' have me. But I'm afraid she speaks without book. I want to know if thee'st seen anything."

"It's a nice point to speak about," said Seth, "and I'm afraid o' being wrong; besides, we've no right t' intermeddle with people's feelings when they wouldn't tell 'em themselves."

Seth paused.

"But thee mightst ask her," he said, presently. "She took no offence at *me* for asking, and thee'st more right than I had, only thee't not in the Society. But Dinah doesn't hold wi' them as are for keeping the Society so strict to themselves. She doesn't mind about making folks enter the Society, so as they're fit t' enter the kingdom o' God. Some o' the brethren at Treddles'on are displeased with her for that."

"Where will she be the rest o' the day?" said Adam.

"She said she shouldn't leave the Farm again to-day," said Seth, "because it's her last Sabbath there, and she's going t' read out o' the big Bible wi' the children."

Adam thought — but did not say — "Then I'll go this afternoon; for if I go to church my thoughts 'ull be with her all the while. They must sing th' anthem without me to-day."

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## CHAPTER LII.

### ADAM AND DINAH.

It was about three o'clock when Adam entered the farmyard and roused Alick and the dogs from their Sunday dozing. Alick said everybody was gone to church "but th' young missis" — so he called Dinah; but this did not disappoint Adam, although the "everybody" was so liberal as to include Nancy the dairymaid, whose works of necessity were not unfrequently incompatible with church-going.

There was perfect stillness about the house: the doors were all closed, and the very stones and tubs seemed quieter than usual. Adam heard the water gently dripping from the pump—that was the only sound; and he knocked at the house door rather softly, as was suitable in that stillness.

The door opened, and Dinah stood before him, coloring deeply with the great surprise of seeing Adam at this hour, when she knew it was his regular practice to be at church. Yesterday he would have said to her without any difficulty, "I came to see you, Dinah: I knew the rest were not at home." But to-day something prevented him from saying that, and he put out his hand to her in silence. Neither of them spoke, and yet both wished they could speak, as Adam entered, and they sat down. Dinah took the chair she had just left; it was at the corner of the table near the window, and there was a book lying on the table, but it was not open: she had been sitting perfectly still, looking at the small bit of clear fire in the bright grate. Adam sat down opposite her, in Mr. Poyser's three-cornered chair.

"Your mother is not ill again, I hope, Adam?" Dinah said, recovering herself. "Seth said she was well this morning."

"No, she's very hearty to-day," said Adam, happy in the signs of Dinah's feeling at the sight of him, but shy.

"There's nobody at home, you see," Dinah said; "but you'll wait. You've been hindered from going to church to-day, doubtless."

"Yes," Adam said, and then paused, before he added, "I was thinking about you: that was the reason."

This confession was very awkward and sudden, Adam felt; for he thought Dinah must understand all he meant. But the frankness of the words caused her immediately to interpret them into a renewal of his brotherly regrets that she was going away, and she answered calmly,—

"Do not be careful and troubled for me, Adam. I have all things and abound at Snowfield. And my mind is at rest, for I am not seeking my own will in going."

"But if things were different, Dinah," said Adam, hesitatingly—"if you knew things that perhaps you don't know now" . . .

Dinah looked at him inquiringly, but instead of going on, he reached a chair and brought it near the corner of the table where she was sitting. She wondered, and was afraid—and the next moment her thoughts flew to the past: was it something about those distant unhappy ones that she didn't know?

Adam looked at her: it was so sweet to look at her eyes, which had now a self-forgetful questioning in them,—for a moment he forgot that he wanted to say anything, or that it was necessary to tell her what he meant.

"Dinah," he said suddenly, taking both her hands between his, "I love you with my whole heart and soul. I love you next to God who made me."

Dinah's lips became pale, like her cheeks, and she trembled violently under the shock of painful joy. Her hands were cold as death between Adam's. She could not draw them away, because he held them fast.

"Don't tell me you can't love me, Dinah. Don't tell me we must part, and pass our lives away from one another."

The tears were trembling in Dinah's eyes, and they fell before she could answer. But she spoke in a quiet low voice.

"Yes, dear Adam, we must submit to another Will. We must part."

"Not if you love me, Dinah—not if you love me," Adam said, passionately. "Tell me—tell me if you can love me better than a brother."

Dinah was too entirely reliant on the Supreme guidance to attempt to achieve any end by a deceptive concealment. She was recovering now from the first shock of emotion, and she looked at Adam with simple sincere eyes as she said,—

"Yes, Adam, my heart is drawn strongly towards you; and of my own will, if I had no clear showing to the contrary, I could find my happiness in being near you, and ministering to you continually. I fear I should forget to rejoice and weep with others; nay, I fear I should forget the Divine presence, and seek no love but yours."

Adam did not speak immediately. They sat looking at each other in delicious silence,—for the first sense of mutual love excludes other feelings; it will have the soul all to itself.

"Then, Dinah," Adam said at last, "how can there be anything contrary to what's right in our belonging to one another, and spending our lives together? Who put this great love into our hearts? Can anything be holier than that? For we can help one another in everything as is good. I'd never think o' putting myself between you and God, and saying you oughtn't to do this, and you oughtn't to do that. You'd follow your conscience as much as you do now."

"Yes, Adam," Dinah said, "I know marriage is a holy state for those who are truly called to it, and have no other draw-

ing; but from my childhood upward I have been led towards another path; all my peace and my joy have come from having no life of my own, no wants, no wishes for myself, and living only in God and those of his creatures whose sorrows and joys he has given me to know. Those have been very blessed years to me, and I feel that if I was to listen to any voice that would draw me aside from that path, I should be turning my back on the light that has shone upon me, and darkness and doubt would take hold of me. We could not bless each other, Adam, if there were doubts in my soul, and if I yearned, when it was too late, after that better part which had once been given me and I had put away from me."

"But if a new feeling has come into your mind, Dinah, and if you love me so as to be willing to be nearer to me than to other people, isn't that a sign that it's right for you to change your life? Doesn't the love make it right when nothing else would?"

"Adam, my mind is full of questionings about that; for now, since you tell me of your strong love towards me, what was clear to me has become dark again. I felt before that my heart was too strongly drawn towards you, and that your heart was not as mine; and the thought of you had taken hold of me, so that my soul had lost its freedom, and was becoming enslaved to an earthly affection, which made me anxious and careful about what should befall myself. For in all other affection I had been content with any small return, or with none; but my heart was beginning to hunger after an equal love from you. And I had no doubt that I must wrestle against that as a great temptation; and the command was clear that I must go away."

"But now, dear, dear Dinah, now you know I love you better than you love me . . . it's all different now. You won't think of going: you'll stay, and be my dear wife, and I shall thank God for giving me my life as I never thanked him before."

"Adam, it's hard to me to turn a deaf ear . . . you know it's hard; but a great fear is upon me. It seems to me as if you were stretching out your arms to me, and beckoning me to come and take my ease, and live for my own delight, and Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, was standing looking towards me, and pointing to the sinful, and suffering, and afflicted. I have seen that again and again when I have been sitting in stillness and darkness, and a great terror has come upon me lest I should become hard, and a lover of self, and no more bear willingly the Redeemer's cross."

Dinah had closed her eyes, and a faint shudder went through her. "Adam," she went on, "you wouldn't desire that we should seek a good through any unfaithfulness to the light that is in us; you wouldn't believe that could be a good. We are of one mind in that."

"Yes, Dinah," said Adam, sadly, "I'll never be the man to urge you against your conscience. But I can't give up the hope that you may come to see different. I don't believe your loving me could shut up your heart; it's only adding to what you've been before, not taking away from it; for it seems to me it's the same with love and happiness as with sorrow — the more we know of it the better we can feel what other people's lives are or might be, and so we shall only be more tender to 'em, and wishful to help 'em. The more knowledge a man has, the better he'll do's work; and feeling's a sort o' knowledge."

Dinah was silent; her eyes were fixed in contemplation of something visible only to herself. Adam went on presently with his pleading, —

"And you can do almost as much as you do now. I won't ask you to go to church with me of a Sunday; you shall go where you like among the people, and teach 'em; for though I like church best, I don't put my soul above yours, as if my words was better for you to follow than your own conscience. And you can help the sick just as much, and you'll have more means o' making 'em a bit comfortable; and you'll be among all your own friends as love you, and can help 'em and be a blessing to 'em till their dying day. Surely, Dinah, you'd be as near to God as if you was living lonely and away from me."

Dinah made no answer for some time. Adam was still holding her hands, and looking at her with almost trembling anxiety, when she turned her grave loving eyes on his, and said, in rather a sad voice, —

"Adam, there is truth in what you say, and there's many of the brethren and sisters who have greater strength than I have, and find their hearts enlarged by the cares of husband and kindred. But I have not faith that it would be so with me, for since my affections have been set above measure on you, I have had less peace and joy in God; I have felt as it were a division in my heart. And think how it is with me, Adam: — that life I have led is like a land I have trodden in blessedness since my childhood; and if I long for a moment to follow the voice which calls me to another land that I

know not, I cannot but fear that my soul might hereafter yearn for that early blessedness which I had forsaken; and where doubt enters there is not perfect love. I must wait for clearer guidance: I must go from you, and we must submit ourselves entirely to the Divine Will. We are sometimes required to lay our natural, lawful affections on the altar."

Adam dared not plead again, for Dinah's was not the voice of caprice or insincerity. But it was very hard for him; his eyes got dim as he looked at her.

"But you may come to feel satisfied . . . to feel that you may come to me again, and we may never part, Dinah?"

"We must submit ourselves, Adam. With time, our duty will be made clear. It may be when I have entered on my former life, I shall find all these new thoughts and wishes vanish, and become as things that were not. Then I shall know that my calling is not towards marriage. But we must wait."

"Dinah," said Adam, mournfully, "you can't love me so well as I love you, else you'd have no doubts. But it's natural you shouldn't; for I'm not so good as you. I can't doubt it's right for me to love the best thing God's ever given me to know."

"Nay, Adam; it seems to me that my love for you is not weak; for my heart waits on your words and looks, almost as a little child waits on the help and tenderness of the strong on whom it depends. If the thought of you took slight hold of me, I should not fear that it would be an idol in the temple. But you will strengthen me—you will not hinder me in seeking to obey to the uttermost."

"Let us go out into the sunshine, Dinah, and walk together. I'll speak no word to disturb you."

They went out and walked towards the fields, where they would meet the family coming from church. Adam said, "Take my arm, Dinah," and she took it. That was the only change in their manner to each other since they were last walking together. But no sadness in the prospect of her going away—in the uncertainty of the issue—could rob the sweetness from Adam's sense that Dinah loved him. He thought he would stay at the Hall Farm all that evening. He would be near her as long as he could.

"Heyday! there's Adam along wi' Dinah," said Mr. Poyser, as he opened the far gate into the Home Close. "I couldna think how he happened away from church. Why," added good Martin, after a moment's pause, "what dost think has just jumped into my head?"



"Summat as hadna far to jump, for it's just under our nose. You mean as Adam's fond o' Dinah."

"Ay! hast ever had any notion of it before?"

"To be sure I have," said Mrs. Poyser, who always declined if possible, to be taken by surprise. "I'm not one o' those as can see the cat i' the dairy, an' wonder what she's come after."

"Thee never saidst a word to me about it."

"Well, I aren't like a bird-clapper, forced to make a rattle when the wind blows on me. I can keep my own counsel when there's no good i' speaking."

"But Dinah 'll ha' none o' him; dost think she will?"

"Nay," said Mrs. Poyser, not sufficiently on her guard against a possible surprise; "she'll never marry anybody, if he isn't a Methodist and a cripple."

"It 'ud ha' been a pretty thing though for 'em t' marry," said Martin, turning his head on one side, as if in pleased contemplation of his new idea. "Thee'dst ha' liked it too, wouldstna?"

"Ah! I should. I should ha' been sure of her then, as she wouldn't go away from me to Snowfield, welly thirty mile off, and me not got a creatur to look to, only neighbors, as are no kin to me, an' most of 'em women as I'd be ashamed to show my face, if *my* dairy things war like their'n. There may well be streaky butter i' the market. An' I should be glad to see the poor thing settled like a Christian woman, with a house of her own over her head; and we'd stock her well wi' linen an' feathers; for I love her next to my own children. An' she makes one feel safer when she's i' the house; for she's like the driven snow: anybody might sin for two as had her at their elbow."

"Dinah," said Tommy, running forward to meet her, "mother says you'll never marry anybody but a Methodist cripple. What a silly you must be!" a comment which Tommy followed up by seizing Dinah with both arms, and dancing along by her side with incommensurate fondness.

"Why, Adam, we missed you i' the singing to-day," said Mr. Poyser. "How was it?"

"I wanted to see Dinah: she's going away so soon," said Adam.

"Ah, lad! can you persuade her to stop somehow? Find her a good husband somewhere i' the parish. If you'll do that, we'll forgive you for missing church. But, anyway, she ~~isna~~ going before the harvest-supper o' Wednesday, and you

must come then. There's Bartle Massey comin', an' happen Craig. You'll be sure an' come, now, at seven? The missis wunna have it a bit later."

"Ay," said Adam, "I'll come if I can. But I can't often say what I'll do beforehand, for the work often holds me longer than I expect. You'll stay till the end o' the week, Dinah?"

"Yes, yes!" said Mr. Poyser; "we'll have no nay."

"She's no call to be in a hurry," observed Mrs. Poyser. "Scarceness o' victual 'ull keep: there's no need to be hasty wi' the cooking. An' scarceness is what there's the biggest stock of i' that country."

Dinah smiled, but gave no promise to stay, and they talked of other things through the rest of the walk, lingering in the sunshine to look at the great flock of geese grazing, at the new corn-ricks, and at the surprising abundance of fruit on the old pear-tree; Nancy and Molly having already hastened home, side by side, each holding, carefully wrapped in her pocket-handkerchief, a prayer-book, in which she could read little beyond the large letters and the *Amens*.

Surely all other leisure is hurry compared with a sunny walk through the fields from "afternoon church,"—as such walks used to be in those old leisurely times, when the boat, gliding sleepily along the canal, was the newest locomotive wonder; when Sunday books had most of them old brown-leather covers, and opened with remarkable precision always in one place. Leisure is gone—gone where the spinning-wheels are gone, and the pack-horses, and the slow wagons, and the pedlers who brought bargains to the door on sunny afternoons. Ingenious philosophers tell you, perhaps, that the great work of the steam-engine is to create leisure for mankind. Do not believe them: it only creates a vacuum for eager thought to rush in. Even idleness is eager now—eager for amusement: prone to excursion-trains, art-museums, periodical literature, and exciting novels: prone even to scientific theorizing, and cursory peeps through microscopes. Old Leisure was quite a different personage: he only read one newspaper, innocent of leaders, and was free from that periodicity of sensations which we call post-time. He was a contemplative, rather stout gentleman, of excellent digestion,—of quiet perceptions, undiseased by hypothesis: happy in his inability to know the causes of things, preferring the things themselves. He lived chiefly in the country, among pleasant seats and homesteads, and was fond of sauntering

by the fruit-tree wall, and scenting the apricots when they were warmed by the morning sunshine, or of sheltering himself under the orchard boughs at noon, when the summer pears were falling. He knew nothing of week-day services, and thought none the worse of the Sunday sermon if it allowed him to sleep from the text to the blessing — liking the afternoon service best, because the prayers were the shortest, and not ashamed to say so; for he had an easy, jolly conscience, broad-backed like himself, and able to carry a great deal of beer or port-wine, — not being made squeamish by doubts and qualms and lofty aspirations. Life was not a task to him, but a sinecure: he fingered the guineas in his pocket, and ate his dinners, and slept the sleep of the irresponsible; for had he not kept up his character by going to church on the Sunday afternoons?

Fine old Leisure! Do not be severe upon him, and judge him by our modern standard: he never went to Exeter Hall, or heard a popular preacher, or read "Tracts for the Times" or "Sartor Resartus."

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## CHAPTER LIII.

### THE HARVEST SUPPER.

As Adam was going homewards, on Wednesday evening, in the six o'clock sunlight, he saw in the distance the last load of barley winding its way towards the yard-gate of the Hall Farm, and heard the chant of "Harvest Home!" rising and sinking like a wave. Fainter and fainter, and more musical through the growing distance, the falling dying sound still reached him, as he neared the Willow Brook. The low westering sun shone right on the shoulders of the old Binton Hills, turning the unconscious sheep into bright spots of light; shone on the windows of the cottage too, and made them a-flame with a glory beyond that of amber or amethyst. It was enough to make Adam feel that he was in a great temple, and that the distant chant was a sacred song.

"It's wonderful," he thought, "how that sound goes to one's heart almost like a funeral bell, for all it tells one o' the joy-fullest time o' the year, and the time when men are mostly the thankfullest. I suppose it's a bit hard to us to think anything's over and gone in our lives; and there's a parting at

the root of all our joys. It's like what I feel about Dinah: I should never ha' come to know that her love 'ud be the greatest o' blessings to me, if what I counted a blessing hadn't been wrenched and torn away from me, and left me with a greater need, so as I could crave and hunger for a greater and a better comfort."

He expected to see Dinah again this evening, and get leave to accompany her as far as Oakbourne; and then he would ask her to fix some time when he might go to Snowfield, and learn whether the last best hope that had been born to him must be resigned like the rest. The work he had to do at home, besides putting on his best clothes, made it seven before he was on his way again to the Hall Farm, and it was questionable whether, with his longest and quickest strides, he should be there in time even for the roast-beef, which came after the plum-pudding; for Mrs. Poyser's supper would be punctual.

Great was the clatter of knives and pewter plates and tin cans when Adam entered the house, but there was no hum of voices to this accompaniment: the eating of excellent roast-beef, provided free of expense, was too serious a business to those good farm-laborers to be performed with a divided attention, even if they had had anything to say to each other, — which they had not; and Mr. Poyser, at the head of the table, was too busy with his carving to listen to Bartle Massey's or Mr. Craig's ready talk.

"Here, Adam," said Mrs. Poyser, who was standing and looking on to see that Molly and Nancy did their duty as waiters, "here's a place kept for you between Mr. Massey and the boys. It's a poor tale you couldn't come to see the pudding when it was whole."

Adam looked anxiously round for a fourth woman's figure; but Dinah was not there. He was almost afraid of asking about her; besides, his attention was claimed by greetings, and there remained the hope that Dinah was in the house, though perhaps disinclined to festivities on the eve of her departure.

It was a goodly sight — that table, with Martin Poyser's round good-humored face and large person at the head of it, helping his servants to the fragrant roast-beef, and pleased when the empty plates came again. Martin, though usually blest with a good appetite, really forgot to finish his own beef to-night — it was so pleasant to him to look on in the intervals of carving, and see how the others enjoyed their supper;

for were they not men who, on all the days of the year except Christmas Day and Sundays, ate their cold dinner, in a make-shift manner, under the hedgerows, and drank their beer out of wooden bottles — with relish certainly, but with their mouths towards the zenith, after a fashion more endurable to ducks than to human bipeds. Martin Poyser had some faint conception of the flavor such men must find in hot roast-beef and fresh-drawn ale. He held his head on one side, and screwed up his mouth, as he nudged Bartle Massey, and watched half-witted Tom Tholer, otherwise known as "Tom Saft," receiving his second plateful of beef. A grin of delight broke over Tom's face as the plate was set down before him, between his knife and fork, which he held erect, as if they had been sacred tapers; but the delight was too strong to continue smouldering in a grin — it burst out the next instant in a long-drawn "haw, haw!" followed by a sudden collapse into utter gravity, as the knife and fork darted down on the prey. Martin Poyser's large person shook with his silent unctuous laugh: he turned towards Mrs. Poyser to see if she, too, had been observant of Tom, and the eyes of husband and wife met in a glance of good-natured amusement.

"Tom Saft" was a great favorite on the farm, where he played the part of the old jester, and made up for his practical deficiencies by his success in repartee. His hits, I imagine, were those of the flail, which falls quite at random, but nevertheless smashes an insect now and then. They were much quoted at sheep-shearing and haymaking times; but I refrain from recording them here, lest Tom's wit should prove to be like that of many other bygone jesters eminent in their day — rather of a temporary nature, not dealing with the deeper and more lasting relations of things.

Tom excepted, Martin Poyser had some pride in his servants and laborers, thinking with satisfaction that they were the best worth their pay of any set on the estate. There was Kester Bale, for example (Beale, probably, if the truth were known, but he was called Bale, and was not conscious of any claim to a fifth letter), — the old man with the close leather cap, and the network of wrinkles on his sun-browned face. Was there any man in Loamshire who knew better the "natur" of all farming work? He was one of those invaluable laborers who cannot only turn their hand to everything, but excel in everything they turn their hand to. It is true Kester's knees were much bent outward by this time, and he walked with a perpetual courtesy, as if he were among the most

reverent of men. And so he was; but I am obliged to admit that the object of his reverence was his own skill, towards which he performed some rather affecting acts of worship. He always thatched the ricks; for if anything were his forte more than another, it was thatching; and when the last touch had been put to the last beehive rick, Kester, whose home lay at some distance from the farm, would take a walk to the rickyard in his best clothes on a Sunday morning, and stand in the lane, at a due distance, to contemplate his own thatching, — walking about to get each rick from the proper point of view. As he courtesied along, with his eyes upturned to the straw knobs imitative of golden globes at the summits of the beehive ricks, which indeed were gold of the best sort, you might have imagined him to be engaged in some pagan act of adoration. Kester was an old bachelor, and reputed to have stockings full of coin, concerning which his master cracked a joke with him every pay-night: not a new, unseasoned joke, but a good old one, that had been tried many times before, and had worn well. "Th' young measter's a merry mon," Kester frequently remarked; for having begun his career by frightening away the crows under the last Martin Poyser but one, he could never cease to account the reigning Martin a young master. I am not ashamed of commemorating old Kester: you and I are indebted to the hard hands of such men — hands that have long ago mingled with the soil they tilled so faithfully, thriftily making the best they could of the earth's fruits, and receiving the smallest share as their own wages.

Then, at the end of the table, opposite his master, there was Alick, the shepherd and head man, with the ruddy face and broad shoulders, not on the best terms with old Kester; indeed, their intercourse was confined to an occasional snarl, for though they probably differed little concerning hedging and ditching and the treatment of ewes, there was a profound difference of opinion between them as to their own respective merits. When Tityrus and Melibæus happen to be on the same farm, they are not sentimentally polite to each other. Alick, indeed, was not by any means a honeyed man: his speech had usually something of a snarl in it, and his broad-shouldered aspect something of the bull-dog expression — "Don't you meddle with me, and I won't meddle with you;" but he was honest even to the splitting of an oat-grain rather than he would take beyond his acknowledged share, and as "close-fisted" with his master's property as if it had

been his own, — throwing very small handfuls of damaged barley to the chickens, because a large handful affected his imagination painfully with a sense of profusion. Good-tempered Tim, the wagoner, who loved his horses, had his grudge against Alick in the matter of corn: they rarely spoke to each other, and never looked at each other, even over their dish of cold potatoes; but then, as this was their usual mode of behavior towards all mankind, it would be an unsafe conclusion that they had more than transient fits of unfriendliness. The lucid character at Hayslope, you perceive, was not of that entirely genial, merry, broad-grinning sort, apparently observed in most districts visited by artists. The mild radiance of a smile was a rare sight on a field-laborer's face, and there was seldom any gradation between bovine gravity and a laugh. Nor was every laborer so honest as our friend Alick. At this very table, among Mr. Poyser's men, there is that big Ben Tholoway, a very powerful thresher, but detected more than once in carrying away his master's corn in his pockets: an action which, as Ben was not a philosopher, could hardly be ascribed to absence of mind. However, his master had forgiven him, and continued to employ him; for the Tholoways had lived on the Common, time out of mind, and had always worked for the Poyseres. And on the whole, I dare say, society was not much the worse because Ben had not six months of it at the treadmill; for his views of depredation were narrow, and the House of Correction might have enlarged them. As it was, Ben ate his roast-beef to-night with a serene sense of having stolen nothing more than a few peas and beans as seed for his garden, since the last harvest-supper, and felt warranted in thinking that Alick's suspicious eye, forever upon him, was an injury to his innocence.

But *now* the roast-beef was finished and the cloth was drawn, leaving a fair large deal table for the bright drinking-cans, and the foaming brown jugs, and the bright brass candlesticks, pleasant to behold. *Now*, the great ceremony of the evening was to begin — the harvest-song, in which every man must join: he might be in tune, if he liked to be singular, but he must not sit with closed lips. The movement was obliged to be in triple time; the rest was *ad libitum*.

As to the origin of this song — whether it came in its actual state from the brain of a single rhapsodist, or was gradually perfected by a school or succession of rhapsodists, I am ignorant. There is a stamp of unity, of individual genius upon it, which inclines me to the former hypothesis, though

I am not blind to the consideration that this unity may rather have arisen from that consensus of many minds which was a condition of primitive thought, foreign to our modern consciousness. Some will perhaps think that they detect in the first quatrain an indication of a lost line, which later rhapsodists, failing in imaginative vigor, have supplied by the feeble device of iteration: others, however, may rather maintain that this very iteration is an original felicity, to which none but the most prosaic minds can be insensible.

The ceremony connected with the song was a drinking ceremony. (That is perhaps a painful fact, but then, you know, we cannot reform our forefathers.) During the first and second quatrain, sung decidedly *forte*, no can was filled.

“Here’s a health unto our master,  
The founder of the feast;  
Here’s a health unto our master  
And to our mistress!

And may his doings prosper,  
Whate’er he takes in hand,  
For we are all his servants,  
And are at his command.”

But now, immediately before the third quatrain or chorus, sung *fortissimo*, with emphatic raps of the table, which gave the effect of cymbals and drum together, Alick’s can was filled, and he was bound to empty it before the chorus ceased

“Then drink, boys, drink!  
And see ye do not spill,  
For if ye do, ye shall drink two,  
For ’tis our master’s will.”

When Alick had gone successfully through this test of steady-handed manliness, it was the turn of old Kester, at his right hand,—and so on, till every man had drunk his initiatory pint under the stimulus of the chorus. Tom Saft—the rogue—took care to spill a little by accident; but Mrs. Poyser (too officiously, Tom thought) interfered to prevent the exaction of the penalty.

To any listener outside the door it would have been the reverse of obvious why the “Drink, boys, drink!” should have such an immediate and often-repeated encore; but once entered, he would have seen that all faces were at present sober, and most of them serious: it was the regular and respectable thing for those excellent farm-laborers to do, as



much as for elegant ladies and gentlemen to smirk and bow over their wine-glasses. Bartle Massey, whose ears were rather sensitive, had gone out to see what sort of evening it was, at an early stage in the ceremony; and had not finished his contemplation, until a silence of five minutes declared that "Drink, boys, drink!" was not likely to begin again for the next twelvemonth. Much to the regret of the boys and Totty: on them the stillness fell rather flat, after that glorious thumping of the table, towards which Totty, seated on her father's knee, contributed with her small might and small fist.

When Bartle re-entered, however, there appeared to be a general desire for solo music after the choral. Nancy declared that Tim the wagoner knew a song and was "allays singing like a lark i' the stable;" whereupon Mr. Poyser said encouragingly, "Come, Tim, lad, let's hear it." Tim looked sheepish, tucked down his head, and said he couldn't sing; but this encouraging invitation of the master's was echoed all round the table. It was a conversational opportunity: everybody could say, "Come, Tim,"—except Alick, who never relaxed into the frivolity of unnecessary speech. At last, Tim's next neighbor, Ben Tholoway, began to give emphasis to his speech by nudges, at which Tim, growing rather savage, said, "Let me alooan, will ye? else I'll ma' ye sing a toon ye wonna like." A good-tempered wagoner's patience has limits, and Tim was not to be urged further.

"Well, then, David, ye're the lad to sing," said Ben, willing to show that he was not discomfited by this check. "Sing 'My loove's a roos wi'out a thorn.'"

The amatory David was a young man of an unconscious abstracted expression, which was due probably to a squint of superior intensity rather than to any mental characteristic; for he was not indifferent to Ben's invitation, but blushed and laughed and rubbed his sleeve over his mouth in a way that was regarded as a symptom of yielding. And for some time the company appeared to be much in earnest about the desire to hear David's song. But in vain. The lyricism of the evening was in the cellar at present, and was not to be drawn from that retreat just yet.

Meanwhile the conversation at the head of the table had taken a political turn. Mr. Craig was not above talking politics occasionally, though he piqued himself rather on a wise insight than on specific information. He saw so far beyond the mere facts of a case, that really it was superfluous to know them.

"I'm no reader o' the paper myself," he observed to-night, as he filled his pipe, "though I might read it fast enough if I liked, for there's Miss Lyddy has 'em, and 's done with 'em 'i no time; but there's Mills, now, sits i' the chimney-corner and reads the paper pretty nigh from morning to night, and when he's got to th' end on't he's more addleheaded than he was at the beginning. He's full o' this peace now, as they talk on; he's been reading and reading, and thinks he's got to the bottom on't. 'Why, Lor' bless you, Mills,' says I, 'you see no more into this thing nor you can see into the middle of a potato. I'll tell you what it is: you think it'll be a fine thing for the country; and I'm not again' it—mark my words—I'm not again' it. But it's my opinion as there's them at the head o' this country as are worse enemies to us nor Bony and all the mounseers he's got at 's back; as for the mounseers, you may skewer half a dozen of 'em at once as if they war frogs.'"

"Ay, ay," said Martin Poyser, listening with an air of much intelligence and edification, "they ne'er ate a bit o' beef i' their lives. Mostly sallet, I reckon."

"And says I to Mills," continued Mr. Craig, "'Will you try to make me believe as furriners like them can do us half th' harm them ministers do with their bad government? If King George 'ud turn 'em all away and govern by himself, he'd see everything righted. He might take on Billy Pitt again if he liked; but I don't see myself what we want wi' anybody besides King and Parliament. It's that nest o' ministers does the mischief, I tell you.'"

"Ah, it's fine talking," observed Mrs. Poyser, who was now seated near her husband, with Totty on her lap—"it's fine talking. It's hard work to tell which is Old Harry when everybody's got boots on."

"As for this peace," said Mr. Poyser, turning his head on one side in a dubitative manner, and giving a precautionary puff to his pipe between each sentence, "I don't know. Th' war's a fine thing for the country, an' how 'll you keep up prices wi'out it? An' them French are a wicked sort o' folks, by what I can make out; what can you do better nor fight 'em?"

"Ye're partly right there, Poyser," said Mr. Craig, "but I'm not again' the pence—to make a holiday for a bit. We can break it when we like, an' I'm in no fear o' Bony, for all they talk so much o' his oliverness. That's what I says to Mills this morning. Lor' bless you, he sees no more through

Bony! . . . why, I put him up to more in three minutes than he gets from 's paper all the year round. Says I, 'Am I a gardener as knows his business, or arn't I, Mills? answer me that.' — 'To be sure y' are, Craig,' says he — he's not a bad fellow, Mills isn't, for a butler, but weak i' the head. 'Well,' says I, 'you talk o' Bony's cliverness; would it be any use my being a first-rate gardener if I'd got nought but a quagmire to work on?' — 'No,' says he. 'Well,' I says, 'that's just what it is wi' Bony. I'll not deny but he may be a bit cliver — he's no Frenchman born, as I understand; but what's he got at's back but mounseers?'"

Mr. Craig paused a moment with an emphatic stare after this triumphant specimen of Socratic argument, and then added, thumping the table rather fiercely, —

"Why, it's a sure thing — and ther'o's them 'ull bear witness to't — as i' one regiment where there was one man a-missing, they put the regimentals on a big monkey, and they fit him as the shell fits the walnut, and you couldn't tell the monkey from the mounseers!"

"Ah! think o' that, now!" said Mr. Poyser, impressed at once with the political bearings of the fact, and with its striking interest as an anecdote in natural history.

"Come, Craig," said Adam, "that's a little too strong. You don't believe that. It's all nonsense about the French being such poor sticks. Mr. Irwine's seen 'em in their own country, and he says they've plenty o' fine fellows among 'em. And as for knowledge, and contrivances, and manufactures, there's a many things as we're a fine sight behind 'em in. It's poor foolishness to run down your enemies. Why, Nelson and the rest of 'em 'nd have no merit i' beating 'em, if they were such offal as folks pretend."

Mr. Poyser looked doubtfully at Mr. Craig, puzzled by this opposition of authorities. Mr. Irwine's testimony was not to be disputed; but, on the other hand, Craig was a knowing fellow, and his view was less startling. Martin had never "heard tell" of the French being good for much. Mr. Craig had found no answer but such as was implied in taking a long draught of ale, and then looking down fixedly at the proportions of his own leg, which he turned a little outward for that purpose, when Bartle Massey returned from the fire-place, where he had been smoking his first pipe in quiet, and broke the silence by saying, as he thrust his forefinger into the canister, —

"Why, Adam, how happened you not to be at church on

Sunday? answer me that, you rascal. The anthem went limping without you. Are you going to disgrace your schoolmaster in his old age?"

"No, Mr. Massey," said Adam. "Mr. and Mrs. Poyser can tell you where I was. I was in no bad company."

"She's gone, Adam — gone to Snowfield," said Mr. Poyser, reminded of Dinah for the first time this evening. "I thought you'd ha' persuaded her better. Nought 'ud hold her, but she must go yesterday forenoon. The missus has hardly got over it. I thought she'd ha' no sperrit for th' harvest supper."

Mrs. Poyser had thought of Dinah several times since Adam had come in, but she had had "no heart" to mention the bad news.

"What!" said Bartle, with an air of disgust. "Was there a woman concerned? Then I give you up, Adam."

"But it's a woman you'n spoke well on, Bartle," said Mr. Poyser. "Come, now, you canna draw back; you said once as women wouldna ha' been a bad invention if they'd all been like Dinah."

"I meant her voice, man — I meant her voice, that was all," said Bartle. "I can bear to hear her speak without wanting to put wool in my ears. As for other things, I dare say she's like the rest o' the women — thinks two and two'll come to make five, if she cries and bothers enough about it."

"Ay, ay!" said Mrs. Poyser; "one 'ud think, an' hear some folks talk, as the men war 'cute enough to count the corns in a bag o' wheat wi' only smelling at it. They can see through a barn-door, *they* can. Perhaps that's the reason they can see so little o' this side on't."

Martin Poyser shook with delighted laughter, and winked at Adam, as much as to say the schoolmaster was in for it now.

"Ah!" said Bartle, sneeringly, "the women are quick enough — they're quick enough. They know the rights of a story before they hear it, and can tell a man what his thoughts are before he knows 'em himself."

"Like enough," said Mrs. Poyser; "for the men are mostly so slow, their thoughts overrun 'em, an' they can only catch 'em by the tail. I can count a stocking-top while a man's getting's tongue ready; an' when he outs wi' his speech at last, there's little broth to be made on't. It's your dead chicks take the longest hatchin'. Howiver, I'm not denyin' the women are foolish: God Almighty made 'em to match the men."

"Match!" said Bartle; "ay, as vinegar matches one's teeth. If a man says a word, his wife'll match it with a contradiction; if he's a mind for hot meat, his wife'll match it with cold bacon; if he laughs, she'll match him with whimpering. She's such a match as the horse-fly is to th' horse: she's got the right venom to sting him with — the right venom to sting him with."

"Yes," said Mrs. Poyser, "I know what the men like — a poor soft, as 'ud simper at 'em like the pictur o' the sun, whether they did right or wrong, an' say thank you for a kick, an' pretend she didna know which end she stood uppermost, till her husband told her. That's what a man wants in a wife, mostly; he wants to make sure o' one fool as 'ull tell him he's wise. But there's some men can do wi'out that — they think so much o' themselves a'ready; an' that's how it is there's old bachelors."

"Come, Craig," said Mr. Poyser, jocosely, "you mun get married pretty quick, else you'll be set down for an old bachelor; an' you see what the women 'ull think on you."

"Well," said Mr. Craig, willing to conciliate Mrs. Poyser, and setting a high value on his own compliments, "I like a cleverish woman — a woman o' sperrit — a managng woman."

"You're out there, Craig," said Bartle, dryly; "you're out there. You judge o' your garden-stuff on a better plan than that: you pick the things for what they can excel in — for what they can excel in. You don't value your peas for their roots, or your carrots for their flowers. Now, that's the way you should choose women: their cleverness 'll never come to much — never come to much; but they make excellent simpletons, ripe and strong-flavored."

"What dost say to that?" said Mr. Poyser, throwing himself back and looking merrily at his wife.

"Say!" answered Mrs. Poyser, with dangerous fire kindling in her eye; "why, I say as some folks' tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin', not to tell you the time o' the day, but because there's summat wrong i' their own inside" . . .

Mrs. Poyser would probably have brought her rejoinder to a further climax, if every one's attention had not at this moment been called to the other end of the table, where the lyrism, which had at first only manifested itself by David's *sotto voce* performance of "My love's a rose without a thorn," had gradually assumed a rather deafening and complex character. Tim, thinking slightly of David's vocalization, was

impelled to supersede that feeble buzz by a spirited commencement of "Three Merry Mowers," but David was not to be put down so easily, and showed himself capable of a copious crescendo, which was rendering it doubtful whether the rose would not predominate over the mowers, when old Kester, with an entirely unmoved and immovable aspect, suddenly set up a quavering treble, — as if he had been an alarm, and the time was come for him to go off.

The company at Alick's end of the table took this form of vocal entertainment very much as a matter of course, being free from musical prejudices; but Bartle Massey laid down his pipe and put his fingers in his ears; and Adam, who had been longing to go, ever since he had heard Dinah was not in the house, rose and said he must bid good-night.

"I'll go with you, lad," said Bartle; "I'll go with you before my ears are split."

"I'll go round by the Common, and see you home, if you like, Mr. Massey," said Adam.

"Ay, ay!" said Bartle; "then we can have a bit o' talk together. I never get hold of you now."

"Eh! it's a pity but you'd sit it out," said Martin Poyser. "They'll all go soon; for th' missis niver lets 'em stay past ten."

But Adam was resolute, so the good-nights were said, and the two friends turned out on their starlight walk together.

"There's that poor fool, Vixen, whimpering for me at home," said Bartle. "I can never bring her here with me for fear she should be struck with Mrs. Poyser's eye, and the poor bitch might go limping forever after."

"I've never any need to drive Gyp back," said Adam, laughing. "He always turns back of his own head when he finds out I'm coming here."

"Ay, ay," said Bartle. "A terrible woman! — made of needles — made of needles. But I stick to Martin — I shall always stick to Martin. And he likes the needles, God help him! He's a cushion made on purpose for 'em."

"But she's a downright good-natur'd woman, for all that," said Adam, "and as true as the daylight. She's a bit cross wi' the dogs when they offer to come in th' house, but if they depeuded on her, she'd take care and have 'em well fed. If her tongue's keen, her heart's tender; I've seen that in times o' trouble. She's one o' those women as are better than their word."

"Well, well," said Bartle, "I don't say th' apple isn't sound at the core; but it sets my teeth on edge — it sets my

## CHAPTER LIV.

## THE MEETING ON THE HILL.

ADAM understood Dinah's haste to go away, and drew hope rather than discouragement from it. She was fearful lest the strength of her feeling towards him should hinder her from waiting and listening faithfully for the ultimate guiding voice from within.

"I wish I'd asked her to write to me, though," he thought. "And yet even that might disturb her a bit, perhaps. She wants to be quite quiet in her old way for a while. And I've no right to be impatient and interrupting her with my wishes. She's told me what her mind is; and she's not a woman to say one thing and mean another. I'll wait patiently."

That was Adam's wise resolution, and it throve excellently for the first two or three weeks on the nourishment it got from the remembrance of Dinah's confession that Sunday afternoon. There is a wonderful amount of sustenance in the first few words of love. But towards the middle of October the resolution began to dwindle perceptibly, and showed dangerous symptoms of exhaustion. The weeks were unusually long; Dinah must surely have had more than enough time to make up her mind. Let a woman say what she will after she has once told a man that she loves him, he is a little too flushed and exalted with that first draught she offers him to care much about the taste of the second: he treads the earth with a very elastic step as he walks away from her, and makes light of all difficulties. But that sort of glow dies out; memory gets sadly diluted with time, and is not strong enough to revive us. Adam was no longer so confident as he had been: he began to fear that perhaps Dinah's old life would have too strong a grasp upon her for any new feeling to triumph. If she had not felt this, she would surely have written to him to give him some comfort; but it appeared that she held it right to discourage him. As Adam's confidence waned, his patience waned with it, and he thought he must write himself; he must ask Dinah not to leave him in painful doubt longer than was needful. He sat up late one night

to write her a letter, but the next morning he burnt it afraid of its effect. It would be worse to have a discouraging answer by letter than from her own lips, for her presence reconciled him to her will.

You perceive how it was: Adam was hungering for the sight of Dinah; and when that sort of hunger reaches a certain stage, a lover is likely to still it though he may have to put his future in pawn.

But what harm could he do by going to Snowfield? Dinah could not be displeased with him for it: she had not forbidden him to go: she must surely expect that he would go before long. By the second Sunday in October this view of the case had become so clear to Adam, that he was already on his way to Snowfield; on horseback this time, for his hours were precious now, and he had borrowed Jonathan Burge's good nag for the journey.

What keen memories went along the road with him! He had often been to Oakbourne and back since that first journey to Snowfield, but beyond Oakbourne the gray stone walls, the broken country, the meagre trees, seemed to be telling him afresh the story of that painful past which he knew so well by heart. But no story is the same to us after a lapse of time; or rather, we who read it are no longer the same interpreters: and Adam this morning brought with him new thoughts through that gray country — thoughts which gave an altered significance to its story of the past.

That is a base and selfish, even a blasphemous, spirit, which rejoices and is thankful over the past evil that has blighted or crushed another, because it has been made a source of unforeseen good to ourselves: Adam could never cease to mourn over that mystery of human sorrow which had been brought so close to him: he could never thank God for another's misery. And if I were capable of that narrow-sighted joy in Adam's behalf, I should still know he was not the man to feel it for himself: he would have shaken his head at such a sentiment, and said, "Evil's evil, and sorrow's sorrow, and you can't alter its nature by wrapping it up in other words. Other folks were not created for my sake, that I should think all square when things turn out well for me."

But it is not ignoble to feel that the fuller life which a sad experience has brought us is worth our own personal share of pain: surely it is not possible to feel otherwise, any more than it would be possible for a man with cataract to regret the painful process by which his dim blurred sight of men as trees



walking had been exchanged for clear outline and effulgent day. The growth of higher feeling within us is like the growth of faculty, bringing with it a sense of added strength: we can no more wish to return to a narrower sympathy, than a painter or a musician can wish to return to his cruder manner, or a philosopher to his less complete formula.

Something like this sense of enlarged being was in Adam's mind this Sunday morning, as he rode along in vivid recollection of the past. His feeling towards Dinah, the hope of passing his life with her, had been the distant unseen point towards which that hard journey from Snowfield eighteen months ago had been leading him. Tender and deep as his love for Hetty had been — so deep that the roots of it would never be torn away — his love for Dinah was better and more precious to him; for it was the outgrowth of that fuller life which had come to him from his acquaintance with deep sorrow. "It's like as if it was a new strength to me," he said to himself, "to love her, and know as she loves me. I shall look t' her to help me to see things right. For she's better than I am — there's less o' self in her, and pride. And it's a feeling as gives you a sort o' liberty, as if you could walk more fearless, when you've more trust in another than y' have in yourself. I've always been thinking I knew better than them as belonged to me, and that's a poor sort o' life, when you can't look to them nearest to you t' help you with a bit better thought than what you've got inside you a'ready."

It was more than two o'clock in the afternoon when Adam came in sight of the gray town on the hillside, and looked searohingly towards the green valley below, for the first glimpse of the old thatched roof near the ugly red mill. The scene looked less harsh in the soft October sunshine than it had done in the eager time of early spring; and the one grand charm it possessed in common with all wide-stretching woodless regions — that it filled you with a new consciousness of the overarching sky — had a milder, more soothing influence than usual, on this almost cloudless day. Adam's doubts and fears melted under this influence as the delicate web-like clouds had gradually melted away into the clear blue above him. He seemed to see Dinah's gentle face assuring him, with its looks alone, of all he longed to know.

He did not expect Dinah to be at home at this hour, but he got down from his horse and tied it at the little gate, that he might ask where she was gone to-day. He had set his mind on following her and bringing her home. She was gone to

Sloman's End, a hamlet about three miles off, over the hill, the old woman told him: had set off directly after morning chapel, to preach in a cottage there, as her habit was. Anybody at the town would tell him the way to Sloman's End. So Adam got on his horse again and rode to the town, putting up at the old inn, and taking a hasty dinner there in the company of the too chatty landlord, from whose friendly questions and reminiscences he was glad to escape as soon as possible, and set out towards Sloman's End. With all his haste it was nearly four o'clock before he could set off, and he thought that as Dinah had gone so early, she would perhaps already be near returning. The little, gray, desolate-looking hamlet, unscreened by sheltering trees, lay in sight long before he reached it; and as he came near he could hear the sound of voices singing a hymn. "Perhaps that's the last hymn before they come away," Adam thought: "I'll walk back a bit, and turn again to meet her, further off the village." He walked back till he got nearly to the top of the hill again, and seated himself on a loose stone, against the low wall, to watch till he should see the little black figure leaving the hamlet and winding up the hill. He chose this spot, almost at the top of the hill, because it was away from all eyes—no house, no cattle, not even a nibbling sheep near—no presence but the still lights and shadows, and the great embracing sky.

She was much longer coming than he expected: he waited an hour at least watching for her and thinking of her, while the afternoon shadows lengthened, and the light grew softer. At last he saw the little black figure coming from between the gray houses, and gradually approaching the foot of the hill. Slowly, Adam thought; but Dinah was really walking at her usual pace, with a light quiet step. Now she was beginning to wind along the path up the hill, but Adam would not move yet: he would not meet her too soon; he had set his heart on meeting her in this assured loneliness. And now he began to fear lest he should startle her too much; "Yet," he thought, "she's not one to be overstartled; she's always so calm and quiet, as if she was prepared for anything."

What was she thinking of as she wound up the hill? Perhaps she had found complete repose without him, and had ceased to feel any need of his love. On the verge of a decision we all tremble: hope pauses with fluttering wings.

But now at last she was very near, and Adam rose from the stone wall. It happened that just as he walked forward, Dinah had paused and turned round to look back at the village: who

does not pause and look back in mounting a hill? Adam was glad; for, with the fine instinct of a lover, he felt that it would be best for her to hear his voice before she saw him. He came within three paces of her and then said, "Dinah!" She started without looking round, as if she connected the sound with no place. "Dinah!" Adam said again. He knew quite well what was in her mind. She was so accustomed to think of impressions as purely spiritual monitions, that she looked for no material visible accompaniment of the voice.

But this second time she looked round. What a look of yearning love it was that the mild gray eyes turned on the strong dark-eyed man! She did not start again at the sight of him; she said nothing, but moved towards him so that his arm could clasp her round.

And they walked on so in silence, while the warm tears fell. Adam was content, and said nothing. It was Dinah who spoke first.

"Adam," she said, "it is the Divine Will. My soul is so knit to yours that it is but a divided life I live without you. And this moment, now you are with me, and I feel that our hearts are filled with the same love, I have a fulness of strength to bear and do our heavenly Father's Will, that I had lost before."

Adam paused and looked into her sincere eyes.

"Then we'll never part any more, Dinah, till death parts us."

And they kissed each other with a deep joy.

What greater thing is there for two human souls, than to feel that they are joined for life—to strengthen each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?

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## CHAPTER LV.

### MARRIAGE BELLS.

In little more than a month after that meeting on the hill—on a rimy morning in departing November—Adam and Dinah were married.

It was an event much thought of in the village. All Mr. Burge's men had a holiday, and all Mr. Poyser's; and most of

those who had a holiday appeared in their best clothes at the wedding. I think there was hardly an inhabitant of Hayslope specially mentioned in this history and still resident in the parish on this November morning, who was not either in church to see Adam and Dinah married, or near the church door to greet them as they came forth. Mrs. Irwine and her daughters were waiting at the churchyard gates in their carriage (for they had a carriage now) to shake hands with the bride and bridegroom, and wish them well; and in the absence of Miss Lydia Donuithorne at Bath, Mrs. Best, Mr. Mills, and Mr. Craig had felt it incumbent on them to represent "the family" at the Chase on the occasion. The churchyard walk was quite lined with familiar faces, many of them faces that had first looked at Dinah when she preached on the Green; and no wonder they showed this eager interest on her marriage morning, for nothing like Dinah and the history which had brought her and Adam Bede together had been known at Hayslope within the memory of man.

Bessy Cranage, in her neatest cap and frock, was crying, though she did not exactly know why; for, as her cousin Wiry Ben, who stood near her, judiciously suggested, Dinah was not going away, and if Bessy was in low spirits, the best thing for her to do was to follow Dinah's example, and marry an honest fellow who was ready to have her. Next to Bessy, just within the church door, there were the Poyser children, peeping round the corner of the pews to get a sight of the mysterious ceremony; Totty's face wearing an unusual air of anxiety at the idea of seeing cousin Dinah come back looking rather old, for in Totty's experience no married people were young.

I envy them all the sight they had when the marriage was fairly ended and Adam led Dinah out of church. She was not in black this morning; for her aunt Poyser would by no means allow such a risk of incurring bad luck, and had herself made a present of the wedding dress, made all of gray, though in the usual Quaker form, for on this point Dinah could not give way. So the lily face looked out with sweet gravity from under a gray Quaker bonnet, neither smiling nor blushing, but with lips trembling a little under the weight of solemn feelings. Adam, as he pressed her arm to his side, walked with his old erectness and his head thrown rather backward as if to face all the world better; but it was not because he was particularly proud this morning, as is the wont of bridegrooms, for his happiness was of a kind that had little reference to

men's opinion of it. There was a tinge of sadness in his deep joy; Dinah knew it, and did not feel aggrieved.

There were three other couples, following the bride and bridegroom: first, Martin Poyser, looking as cheery as a bright fire on this rimy morning, led quiet Mary Burge, the bridesmaid; then came Seth serenely happy, with Mrs. Poyser on his arm; and last of all Bartle Massey, with Lisbeth — Lisbeth in a new gown and bonnet, too busy with her pride in her son, and her delight in possessing the one daughter she had desired, to devise a single pretext for complaint.

Bartle Massey had consented to attend the wedding at Adam's earnest request, under protest against marriage in general, and the marriage of a sensible man in particular. Nevertheless, Mr. Poyser had a joke against him after the wedding dinner, to the effect that in the vestry he had given the bride one more kiss than was necessary.

Behind this last couple came Mr. Irwine, glad at heart over this good morning's work of joining Adam and Dinah. For he had seen Adam in the worst moments of his sorrow; and what better harvest from that painful seed-time could there be than this? The love that had brought hope and comfort in the hour of despair, the love that had found its way to the dark prison cell and to poor Hetty's darker soul — this strong, gentle love was to be Adam's companion and helper till death.

There was much shaking of hands mingled with "God bless you's," and other good wishes to the four couples, at the church-yard gate, Mr. Poyser answering for the rest with unwonted vivacity of tongue, for he had all the appropriate wedding-day jokes at his command. And the women, he observed, could never do anything but put finger in eye at a wedding. Even Mrs. Poyser could not trust herself to speak as the neighbors shook hands with her; and Lisbeth began to cry in the face of the very first person who told her she was getting young again.

Mr. Joshua Rann, having a slight touch of rheumatism, did not join in the ringing of the bells this morning, and, looking on with some contempt at these informal greetings which required no official co-operation from the clerk, began to hum in his musical bass, "Oh what a joyful thing it is," by way of preluding a little to the effect he intended to produce in the wedding psalm next Sunday.

"That's a bit of good news to cheer Arthur," said Mr. Irwine to his mother, as they drove off. "I shall write to him the first thing when we get home."

## EPILOGUE.

It is near the end of June, in 1807. The workshops have been shut up half an hour or more in Adam Bede's timber-yard, which used to be Jonathan Burge's, and the mellow evening light is falling on the pleasant house with the buff walls and the soft gray thatch, very much as it did when we saw Adam bringing in the keys on that June evening nine years ago.

There is a figure we know well, just come out of the house, and shading her eyes with her hands as she looks for something in the distance; for the rays that fall on her white borderless cap and her pale auburn hair are very dazzling. But now she turns away from the sunlight and looks towards the door.

We can see the sweet pale face quite well now: it is scarcely at all altered — only a little fuller, to correspond to her more matronly figure, which still seems light and active enough in the plain black dress.

"I see him, Seth," Dinah said, as she looked into the house. "Let us go and meet him. Come, Lisbeth, come with mother."

The last call was answered immediately by a small fair creature with pale auburn hair and gray eyes, little more than four years old, who ran out silently and put her hand into her mother's.

"Come, uncle Seth," said Dinah.

"Ay, ay, we're coming," Seth answered from within, and presently appeared stooping under the doorway, being taller than usual by the black head of a sturdy two-year-old nephew, who had caused some delay by demanding to be carried on uncle's shoulder.

"Better take him on thy arm, Seth," said Dinah, looking fondly at the stout black-eyed fellow. "He's troublesome to thee so."

"Nay, nay: Addy likes a ride on my shoulder. I can carry him so for a bit." A kindness which young Addy acknowledged by drumming his heels with promising force against uncle Seth's chest. But to walk by Dinah's side, and be tyrannized over by Dinah's and Adam's children, was uncle Seth's earthly happiness.

"Where didst see him?" asked Seth, as they walked on into the adjoining field. "I can't catch sight of him anywhere."

"Between the hedges by the roadside," said Dinah. "I saw his hat and his shoulder. There he is again."

"Trust thee for catching sight of him if he's anywhere to be seen," said Seth, smiling. "Thee't like poor mother used to be. She was always on the lookout for Adam, and could see him sooner than other folks, for all her eyes got dim."

"He's been longer than he expected," said Dinah, taking Arthur's watch from a small side-pocket and looking at it; "it's nigh upon seven now."

"Ay, they'd have a deal to say to one another," said Seth, "and the meeting 'ud touch 'em both pretty closish. Why, it's getting on towards eight years since they parted."

"Yes," said Dinah, "Adam was greatly moved this morning at the thought of the change he should see in the poor young man, from the sickness he has undergone, as well as the years which have changed us all. And the death of the poor wanderer, when she was coming back to us, has been sorrow upon sorrow."

"See, Addy," said Seth, lowering the young one to his arm now, and pointing, "there's father coming — at the far stile."

Dinah hastened her steps, and little Lisbeth ran on at her utmost speed till she clasped her father's leg. Adam patted her head and lifted her up to kiss her, but Dinah could see the marks of agitation on his face as she approached him, and he put her arm within his in silence.

"Well, youngster, must I take you?" he said, trying to smile, when Addy stretched out his arms — ready, with the usual baseness of infancy, to give up his uncle Seth at once, now there was some rarer patronage at hand.

"It's ent me a good deal, Dinah," Adam said at last, when they were walking on.

"Didst find him greatly altered?" said Dinah.

"Why, he's altered and yet not altered. I should ha' known him anywhere. But his color's changed, and he looks sadly. However, the doctors say he'll soon be set right in his own country air. He's all sound in th' inside; it's only the fever shattered him so. But he speaks just the same, and smiles at me just as he did when he was a lad. It's wonderful how he's always had just the same sort o' look when he smiles."

"I've never seen him smile, poor young man," said Dinah.

"But thee *wilt* see him smile, to-morrow," said Adam. "He asked after thee the first thing when he began to come round, and we could talk to one another. 'I hope she isn't altered,' he said, 'I remember her face so well.' I told him 'no,'" Adam continued, looking fondly at the eyes that were turned up towards his, "only a bit plumper, as thee'dst a right to be

after seven year. 'I may come and see her to-morrow, mayn't I?' he said; 'I long to tell her how I've thought of her all these years.'"

"Didst tell him I'd always used the watch?" said Dinah.

"Ay; and we talked a deal about thee, for he says he never saw a woman a bit like thee. 'I shall turn Methodist some day,' he said, 'when she preaches out of doors, and go to hear her.' And I said, 'Nay, sir, you can't do that, for Conference has forbid the women preaching, and she's given it up, all but talking to the people a bit in their houses.'"

"Ah," said Seth, who could not repress a comment on this point, "and a sore pity it was o' Conference; and if Dinah had seen as I did, we'd ha' left the Wesleyans and joined a body that 'ud put no bonds on Christian liberty."

"Nay, lad, nay," said Adam, "she was right and thee wast wrong. There's no rule so wise but what it's a pity for somebody or other. Most o' the women do more harm nor good with their preaching—they've not got her gift nor her sperrit; and she's seen that, and she thought it right to set th' example o' submiting, for she's not held from other sorts o' teaching. And I agree with her, and approve o' what she did."

Seth was silent. This was a standing subject of difference rarely alluded to, and Dinah, wishing to quit it at once, said,—

"Didst remember, Adam, to speak to Colonel Donnithorne the words my uncle and aunt intrusted to thee?"

"Yes, and he's going to the Hall Farm, with Mr. Irwine the day after to-morrow. Mr. Irwine came in while we were talking about it, and he would have it as the Colonel must see nobody but thee to-morrow: he said—and he's in the right of it—as it'll be bad for him t' have his feelings stirred with seeing many people one after another. 'We must get you strong and hearty,' he said, 'that's the first thing to be done, Arthur, and then you shall have your own way. But I shall keep you under your old tutor's thumb till then.' Mr. Irwine's fine and joyful at having him home again."

Adam was silent a little while, and then said,—

"It was very cutting when we first saw one another. He'd never heard about poor Hetty till Mr. Irwine met him in London, for the letters missed him on his journey. The first thing he said to me, when we'd got hold o' one another's hands was, 'I could never do anything for her, Adam—she lived long enough for all the suffering—and I'd thought so of the time when I might do something for her. But you told me



the truth when you said to me once, "There's a sort of wrong that can never be made up for."'"

"Why, there's Mr. and Mrs. Poyser coming in at the yard gate," said Seth.

"So there is," said Dinah. "Run, Lisbeth, run to meet aunt Poyser. Come in, Adam, and rest; it has been a hard day for thee."

THE END.

IMPRESSIONS  
OF  
THEOPHRASTUS SUCH



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# THEOPHRASTUS SUCH.

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## I.

### LOOKING INWARD.

It is my habit to give an account to myself of the characters I meet with: can I give any true account of my own? I am a bachelor, without domestic distractions of any sort, and have all my life been an attentive companion to myself, flattering my nature agreeably on plausible occasions, reviling it rather bitterly when it mortified me, and in general remembering its doings and sufferings with a tenacity which is too apt to raise surprise if not disgust at the careless inaccuracy of my acquaintances, who impute to me opinions I never held, express their desire to convert me to my favorite ideas, forget whether I have ever been to the East, and are capable of being three several times astonished at my never having told them before of my accident in the Alps, causing me the nervous shock which has ever since notably diminished my digestive powers. Surely I ought to know myself better than these indifferent outsiders can know me; nay, better even than my intimate friends, to whom I have never breathed those items of my inward experience which have chiefly shaped my life.

Yet I have often been forced into the reflection that even the acquaintances who are as forgetful of my biography and tenets as they would be if I were a dead philosopher, are probably aware of certain points in me which may not be included in my most active suspicion. We sing an exquisite passage out of tune and innocently repeat it for the greater pleasure of our hearers. Who can be aware of what his foreign accent is in the ears of a native? And how can a man be conscious of that dull perception which causes him to mistake altogether what will make him agreeable to a partic-

ular woman, and to persevere eagerly in a behavior which she is privately recording against him? I have had some confidences from my female friends as to their opinion of other men whom I have observed trying to make themselves amiable, and it has occurred to me that though I can hardly be so blundering as Lippus and the rest of those mistaken candidates for favor whom I have seen ruining their chance by a too elaborate personal canvass, I must still come under the common fatality of mankind and share the liability to be absurd without knowing that I am absurd. It is in the nature of foolish reasoning to seem good to the foolish reasoner. Hence with all possible study of myself, with all possible effort to escape from the pitiable illusion which makes men laugh, shriek, or curl the lip at Folly's likeness, in total unconsciousness that it resembles themselves, I am obliged to recognize that while there are secrets in me unguessed by others, these others have certain items of knowledge about the extent of my powers and the figure I make with them, which in turn are secrets unguessed by me. When I was a lad I danced a hornpipe with arduous scrupulosity, and while suffering pangs of pallid shyness was yet prond of my superiority as a dancing pupil, imagining for myself a high place in the estimation of beholders; but I can now picture the amusement they had in the incongruity of my solemn face and ridiculous legs. What sort of hornpipe am I dancing now?

Thus if I laugh at you, O fellow-men! if I trace with curious interest your labyrinthine self-delusions, note the inconsistencies in your zealous adhesions, and smile at your helpless endeavors in a rashly chosen part, it is not that I feel myself aloof from you: the more intimately I seem to discern your weaknesses, the stronger to me is the proof that I share them. How otherwise could I get the discernment? — for even what we are averse to, what we vow not to entertain, must have shaped or shadowed itself within us as a possibility before we can think of exorcising it. No man can know his brother simply as a spectator. Dear blunderers, I am one of you. I wince at the fact, but I am not ignorant of it, that I too am laughable on unsuspected occasions; nay, in the very tempest and whirlwind of my anger, I include myself under my own indignation. If the human race has a bad reputation, I perceive that I cannot escape being compromised. And thus while I carry in myself the key to other men's experience, it is only by observing others that I can so far correct my self-ignorance as to arrive at the certainty that I am liable to

commit myself unawares and to manifest some incompetency which I know no more of than the blind man knows of his image in the glass.

Is it then possible to describe one's self at once faithfully and fully? In all autobiography there is, nay, ought to be, an incompleteness which may have the effect of falsity. We are each of us bound to reticence by the piety we owe to those who have been nearest to us and have had a mingled influence over our lives; by the fellow-feeling which should restrain us from turning our volunteered and picked confessions into an act of accusation against others, who have no chance of vindicating themselves; and most of all by that reverence for the higher efforts of our common nature, which commands us to bury its lowest fatalities, its inviolable remnants of the brute, its most agonizing struggles with temptation, in unbroken silence. But the incompleteness which comes of self-ignorance may be compensated by self-betrayal. A man who is affected to tears in dwelling on the generosity of his own sentiments makes me aware of several things not included under those terms. Who has sinned more against those three duteous reticences than Jean Jacques? Yet half our impressions of his character come not from what he means to convey, but from what he unconsciously enables us to discern.

This naïve veracity of self-presentation is attainable by the slenderest talent on the most trivial occasions. The least lucid and impressive of orators may be perfectly successful in showing us the weak points of his grammar. Hence I too may be so far like Jean Jacques as to communicate more than I am aware of. I am not indeed writing an autobiography, or pretending to give an unreserved description of myself, but only offering some slight confessions in an apologetic light, to indicate that if in my absence you dealt as freely with my unconscious weaknesses as I have dealt with the unconscious weaknesses of others, I should not feel myself warranted by common-sense in regarding your freedom of observation as an exceptional case of evil-speaking; or as malignant interpretation of a character which really offers no handle to just objection; or even as an unfair use for your amusement of disadvantages which, since they are mine, should be regarded with more than ordinary tenderness. Let me at least try to feel myself in the ranks with my fellow-men. It is true, that I would rather not hear either your well-founded ridicule or your judicious strictures. Though not averse to finding fault with myself, and conscious of deserving lashes,



I like to keep the scourge in my own discriminating hand. I never felt myself sufficiently meritorious to like being hated as a proof of my superiority, or so thirsty for improvement as to desire that all my acquaintances should give me their candid opinion of me. I really do not want to learn from my enemies: I prefer having none to learn from. Instead of being glad when men use me despitefully, I wish they would behave better and find a more amiable occupation for their intervals of business. In brief, after a close intimacy with myself for a longer period than I choose to mention, I find within me a permanent longing for approbation, sympathy, and love.

Yet I am a bachelor, and the person I love best has never loved me, or known that I loved her. Though continually in society, and caring about the joys and sorrows of my neighbors, I feel myself, so far as my personal lot is concerned, uncared for and alone. "Your own fault, my dear fellow!" said Minutius Felix, one day that I had incautiously mentioned this uninteresting fact. And he was right — in senses other than he intended. Why should I expect to be admired, and have my company doted on? I have done no services to my country beyond those of every peaceable orderly citizen; and as to intellectual contribution, my only published work was a failure, so that I am spoken of to inquiring beholders as "the author of a book you have probably not seen." (The work was a humorous romance, unique in its kind, and I am told is much tasted in a Cherokee translation, where the jokes are rendered with all the serious eloquence characteristic of the Red races.) This sort of distinction, as a writer nobody is likely to have read, can hardly counteract an indistinctness in my articulation, which the best-intentioned loudness will not remedy. Then, in some quarters my awkward feet are against me, the length of my upper lip, and an inveterate way I have of walking with my head foremost and my chin projecting. One can become only too well aware of such things by looking in the glass, or in that other mirror held up to nature in the frank opinions of street-boys, or of our Free People travelling by excursion train; and no doubt they account for the half-suppressed smile which I have observed on some fair faces when I have first been presented before them. This direct perceptive judgment is not to be argued against. But I am tempted to remonstrate when the physical points I have mentioned are apparently taken to warrant unfavorable inferences concerning my mental quickness. With

all the increasing uncertainty which modern progress has thrown over the relations of mind and body, it seems tolerably clear that wit cannot be seated in the upper lip, and that the balance of the haunches in walking has nothing to do with the subtle discrimination of ideas. Yet strangers evidently do not expect me to make a clever observation, and my good things are as unnoticed as if they were anonymous pictures. I have indeed had the mixed satisfaction of finding that when they were appropriated by some one else they were found remarkable and even brilliant. It is to be borne in mind that I am not rich, have neither stud nor cellar, and no very high connections such as give to a look of imbecility a certain prestige of inheritance through a titled line; just as "the Austrian lip" confers a grandeur of historical associations on a kind of feature which might make us reject an advertising footman. I have now and then done harm to a good cause by speaking for it in public, and have discovered too late that my attitude on the occasion would more suitably have been that of negative beneficence. Is it really to the advantage of an opinion that I should be known to hold it? And as to the force of my arguments, that is a secondary consideration with audiences who have given a new scope to the *ex pede Heroulem* principle, and from awkward feet infer awkward fallacies. Once, when zeal lifted me on my legs, I distinctly heard an enlightened artisan remark, "Here's a rum cut!" — and doubtless he reasoned in the same way as the elegant Glycera when she politely puts on an air of listening to me, but elevates her eyebrows and chills her glance in sign of predetermined neutrality: both have their reasons for judging the quality of my speech beforehand.

This sort of reception to a man of affectionate disposition, who has also the innocent vanity of desiring to be agreeable, has naturally a depressing if not embittering tendency; and in early life I began to seek for some consoling point of view, some warrantable method of softening the hard peas I had to walk on, some comfortable fanaticism which might supply the needed self-satisfaction. At one time I dwelt much on the idea of compensation; trying to believe that I was all the wiser for my bruised vanity, that I had the higher place in the true spiritual scale, and even that a day might come when some visible triumph would place me in the French heaven of having the laughers on my side. But I presently perceived that this was a very odious sort of self-cajolery. Was it in the least true that I was wiser than several of my

friends who made an excellent figure, and were perhaps praised a little beyond their merit? Is the ugly unready man in the corner, outside the current of conversation, really likely to have a fairer view of things than the agreeable talker, whose success strikes the unsuccessful as a repulsive example of forwardness and conceit? And as to compensation in future years, would the fact that I myself got it reconcile me to an order of things in which I could see a multitude with as bad a share as mine, who, instead of getting their corresponding compensation, were getting beyond the reach of it in old age? What could be more contemptible than the mood of mind which makes a man measure the justice of divine or human law by the agreeableness of his own shadow and the ample satisfaction of his own desires?

I dropped a form of consolation which seemed to be encouraging me in the persuasion that my discontent was the chief evil in the world, and my benefit the soul of good in that evil. May there not be at least a partial release from the imprisoning verdict that a man's philosophy is the formula of his personality? In certain branches of science we can ascertain our personal equation, the measure of difference between our own judgments and an average standard: may there not be some corresponding correction of our personal partialities in moral theorizing? If a squint or other ocular defect disturbs my vision, I can get instructed in the fact, be made aware that my condition is abnormal, and either through spectacles or diligent imagination I can learn the average appearance of things: is there no remedy or corrective for that inward squint which consists in a dissatisfied egoism or other want of mental balance? In my conscience I saw that the bias of personal discontent was just as misleading and odious as the bias of self-satisfaction. Whether we look through the rose-colored glass or the indigo, we are equally far from the hues which the healthy human eye beholds in heaven above and earth below. I began to dread ways of consoling which were really a flattering of native illusions, a feeding-up into monstrosity of an inward growth already disproportionate; to get an especial scorn for that scorn of mankind which is a transmuted disappointment of preposterous claims; to watch with peculiar alarm lest what I called my philosophic estimate of the human lot in general, should be a mere prosaic lyric expressing my own pain and consequent bad temper. The standing-ground worth striving after seemed to be some Delectable Mountain, whence I could see things in proportions

as little as possible determined by that self-partiality which certainly plays a necessary part in our bodily sustenance, but has a starving effect on the mind.

Thus I finally gave up any attempt to make out that I preferred cutting a bad figure, and that I liked to be despised, because in this way I was getting more virtuous than my successful rivals; and I have long looked with suspicion on all views which are recommended as peculiarly consolatory to wounded vanity or other personal disappointment. The consolations of egoism are simply a change of attitude or a resort to a new kind of diet which soothes and fattens it. Fed in this way it is apt to become a monstrous spiritual pride, or a chuckling satisfaction that the final balance will not be against us but against those who now eclipse us. Examining the world in order to find consolation is very much like looking carefully over the pages of a great book in order to find our own name, if not in the text, at least in a laudatory note: whether we find what we want or not, our preoccupation has hindered us from a true knowledge of the contents. But an attention fixed on the main theme or various matter of the book would deliver us from that slavish subjection to our own self-importance. And I had the mighty volume of the world before me. Nay, I had the struggling action of a myriad lives around me, each single life as dear to itself as mine to me. Was there no escape here from this stupidity of a murmuring self-occupation? Clearly enough, if anything hindered my thought from rising to the force of passionately interested contemplation, or my poor pent-up pond of sensitiveness from widening into a beneficent river of sympathy, it was my own dulness; and though I could not make myself the reverse of shallow all at once, I had at least learned where I had better turn my attention.

Something came of this alteration in my point of view, though I admit that the result is of no striking kind. It is unnecessary for me to utter modest denials, since none have assured me that I have a vast intellectual scope, or — what is more surprising, considering I have done so little — that I might, if I chose, surpass any distinguished man whom they wish to depreciate. I have not attained any lofty peak of magnanimity, nor would I trust beforehand in my capability of meeting a severe demand for moral heroism. But that I have at least succeeded in establishing a habit of mind which keeps watch against my self-partiality and promotes a fair consideration of what touches the feelings or the fortunes

of my neighbors, seems to be proved by the ready confidence with which men and women appeal to my interest in their experience. It is gratifying to one who would above all things avoid the insanity of fancying himself a more momentous or touching object than he really is, to find that nobody expects from him the least sign of such mental aberration, and that he is evidently held capable of listening to all kinds of personal outpouring without the least disposition to become communicative in the same way. This confirmation of the hope that my bearing is not that of the self-flattering lunatic is given me in ample measure. My acquaintances tell me unreservedly of their triumphs and their piques; explain their purposes at length, and reassure me with cheerfulness as to their chances of success; insist on their theories and accept me as a dummy with whom they rehearse their side of future discussions; unwind their coiled-up griefs in relation to their husbands, or recite to me examples of feminine incomprehensibleness as typified in their wives; mention frequently the fair applause which their merits have wrung from some persons, and the attacks to which certain oblique motives have stimulated others. At the time when I was less free from superstition about my own power of charming, I occasionally, in the glow of sympathy which embraced me and my confiding friend on the subject of his satisfaction or resentment, was urged to hint at a corresponding experience in my own case; but the signs of a rapidly lowering pulse and spreading nervous depression in my previously vivacious interlocutor, warned me that I was acting on that dangerous misreading, "Do as you are done by." Recalling the true version of the golden rule, I could not wish that others should lower my spirits as I was lowering my friend's. After several times obtaining the same result from a like experiment in which all the circumstances were varied except my own personality, I took it as an established inference that these fitful signs of a lingering belief in my own importance were generally felt to be abnormal, and were something short of that sanity which I aimed to secure. Clearness on this point is not without its gratifications, as I have said. While my desire to explain myself in private ears has been quelled, the habit of getting interested in the experience of others has been continually gathering strength, and I am really at the point of finding that this world would be worth living in without any lot of one's own. Is it not possible for me to enjoy the scenery of the earth without saying to myself, I have a cabbage-garden in it? But this sounds

like the lunacy of fancying one's self everybody else and being unable to play one's own part decently — another form of the disloyal attempt to be independent of the common lot, and to live without a sharing of pain.

Perhaps I have made self-betraysals enough already to show that I have not arrived at that non-human independence. My conversational reticences about myself turn into garrulousness on paper — as the sea-lion plunges and swims the more energetically because his limbs are of a sort to make him shambling on land. The act of writing, in spite of past experience, brings with it the vague, delightful illusion of an audience nearer to my idiom than the Cherokees, and more numerous than the visionary One for whom many authors have declared themselves willing to go through the pleasing punishment of publication. My illusion is of a more liberal kind, and I imagine a far-off, hazy, multitudinous assemblage, as in a picture of Paradise, making an approving chorus to the sentences and paragraphs of which I myself particularly enjoy the writing. The haze is a necessary condition. If any physiognomy becomes distinct in the foreground, it is fatal. The countenance is sure to be one bent on discountenancing my innocent intentions: it is pale-eyed, incapable of being amused when I am amused or indignant at what makes me indignant; it stares at my presumption, pities my ignorance, or is manifestly preparing to expose the various instances in which I unconsciously disgrace myself. I shudder at this too corporeal auditor, and turn towards another point of the compass where the haze is unbroken. Why should I not indulge this remaining illusion, since I do not take my approving choral paradise as a warrant for setting the press to work again and making some thousand sheets of superior paper unsalable? I leave my manuscripts to a judgment outside my imagination, but I will not ask to hear it, or request my friend to pronounce, before I have been buried decently, what he really thinks of my parts, and to state candidly whether my papers would be most usefully applied in lighting the cheerful domestic fire. It is too probable that he will be exasperated at the trouble I have given him of reading them; but the consequent clearness and vivacity which he could demonstrate to me that the fault of my manuscripts, as of my one published work, is simply flatness, and not that surpassing subtilty which is the preferable ground of popular neglect — this verdict, however instructively expressed, is a portion of earthly discipline of which I will not beseech my friend to be the instrument. Other

persons, I am aware, have not the same cowardly shrinking from a candid opinion of their performances, and are even importunately eager for it ; but I have convinced myself in numerous cases that such expositors of their own back to the smiter were of too hopeful a disposition to believe in the scourge, and really trusted in a pleasant anointing, an outpouring of balm without any previous wounds. I am of a less trusting disposition, and will only ask my friend to use his judgment in insuring me against posthumous mistake.

Thus I make myself a charter to write, and keep the pleasing, inspiring illusion of being listened to, though I may sometimes write about myself. What I have already said on this too familiar theme has been meant only as a preface, to show that in noting the weaknesses of my acquaintances I am conscious of my fellowship with them. That a gratified sense of superiority is at the root of barbarous laughter may be at least half the truth. But there is a loving laughter in which the only recognized superiority is that of the ideal self, the God within, holding the mirror and the scourge for our own pettiness as well as our neighbors'.

## II.

### LOOKING BACKWARD.

MOST of us who have had decent parents would shrink from wishing that our father and mother had been somebody else whom we never knew; yet it is held no impiety, rather, a graceful mark of instruction, for a man to wail that he was not the son of another age and another nation, of which also he knows nothing except through the easy process of an imperfect imagination and a flattering fancy.

But the period thus looked back on with a purely admiring regret, as perfect enough to suit a superior mind, is always a long way off; the desirable contemporaries are hardly nearer than Leonardo da Vinci, most likely they are the fellow-citizens of Pericles, or, best of all, of the *Æolic* lyrists whose sparse remains suggest a comfortable contrast with our redundancy. No impassioned personage wishes he had been born in the age of Pitt, that his ardent youth might have eaten the dearest bread, dressed itself with the longest coat-tails and the shortest waist, or heard the loudest grumbling at the heaviest war-taxes; and it would be really something original in polished verse if one of our young writers declared he would gladly be turned eighty-five that he might have known the joy and pride of being an Englishman when there were fewer reforms and plenty of highwaymen, fewer discoveries and more faces pitted with the small-pox, when laws were made to keep up the price of corn, and the troublesome Irish were more miserable. Three-quarters of a century ago is not a distance that lends much enchantment to the view. We are familiar with the average men of that period, and are still consciously encumbered with its bad contrivances and mistaken acts. The lords and gentlemen painted by young Lawrence talked and wrote their nonsense in a tongue we thoroughly understand; hence their times are not much flattered, not much glorified by the yearnings of that modern sect of Flagellants who make a ritual of lashing — not themselves but — all their neighbors. To me, however, that paternal time,



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the time of my father's youth, never seemed prosaic, for it came to my imagination first through his memories, which made a wondrous perspective to my little daily world of discovery. And for my part I can call no age absolutely unpoetic: how should it be so, since there are always children to whom the acorns and the swallow's eggs are a wonder, always those human passions and fatalities through which Garriock as Hamlet in bobwig and knee-breeches moved his audience more than some have since done in velvet tunic and plume? But every age since the golden may be made more or less prosaic by minds that attend only to its vulgar and sordid elements, of which there was always an abundance even in Greece and Italy, the favorite realms of the retrospective optimists. To be quite fair towards the ages, a little ugliness as well as beauty must be allowed to each of them, a little implicit poetry even to those which echoed loudest with servile, pompous, and trivial prose.

Such impartiality is not in vogue at present. If we acknowledge our obligation to the ancients, it is hardly to be done without some flouting of our contemporaries, who with all their faults must be allowed the merit of keeping the world habitable for the refined eulogists of the blameless past. One wonders whether the remarkable originators who first had the notion of digging wells, or of churning for butter, and who were certainly very useful to their own time as well as ours, were left quite free from invidious comparison with predecessors who let the water and the milk alone, or whether some rhetorical nomad, as he stretched himself on the grass with a good appetite for contemporary butter, became loud on the virtue of ancestors who were uncorrupted by the produce of the cow; nay, whether in a high flight of imaginative self-sacrifice (after swallowing the butter) he even wished himself earlier born and already eaten for the sustenance of a generation more naïve than his own.

I have often had the fool's hectic of wishing about the unalterable, but with me that useless exercise has turned chiefly on the conception of a different self, and not, as it usually does in literature, on the advantage of having been born in a different age, and more especially in one where life is imagined to have been altogether majestic and graceful. With my present abilities, external proportions, and generally small provision for ecstatic enjoyment, where is the ground for confidence that I should have had a preferable career in such an epoch of society? An age in which every department

has its awkward-squad seems in my mind's eye to suit me better. I might have wandered by the Strymon under Philip and Alexander without throwing any new light on method or organizing the sum of human knowledge; on the other hand, I might have objected to Aristotle as too much of a systematizer, and have preferred the freedom of a little self-contradiction as offering more chances of truth. I gather, too, from the undeniable testimony of his disciple Theophrastus that there were bores, ill-bred persons, and detractors even in Athens, of species remarkably corresponding to the English, and not yet made enduring by being classic; and, altogether, with my present fastidious nostril, I feel that I am the better off for possessing Athenian life solely as an inodorous fragment of antiquity. As to Sappho's Mitylene, while I am convinced that the Lesbian capital held some plain men of middle stature and slow conversational powers, the addition of myself to their number, though clad in the majestic folds of the himation and without cravat, would hardly have made a sensation among the accomplished fair ones who were so precise in adjusting their own drapery about their delicate ankles. Whereas by being another sort of person in the present age I might have given it some needful theoretic clew. Or I might have poured forth poetic strains which would have anticipated theory and seemed a voice from

"the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world dreaming of things to come."

Or I might have been one of those benignant lovely souls who, without astonishing the public and posterity, make a happy difference in the lives close around them, and in this way lift the average of earthly joy. In some form or other I might have been so filled from the store of universal existence that I should have been freed from that empty wishing which is like a child's cry to be inside a golden cloud, its imagination being too ignorant to figure the lining of dimness and damp.

On the whole, though there is some rash boasting about enlightenment, and an occasional insistence on an originality which is that of the present year's corn-crop, we seem too much disposed to indulge, and to call by complimentary names, a greater charity for other portions of the human race than for our contemporaries. All reverence and gratitude for the worthy Dead on whose labors we have entered, all care for the future generations whose lot we are preparing; but some

affection and fairness for those who are doing the actual work of the world, some attempt to regard them with the same freedom from ill-temper, whether on private or public grounds, as we may hope will be felt by those who will call us ancient! Otherwise, the looking before and after, which is our grand human privilege, is in danger of turning to a sort of other-worldliness, breeding a more illogical indifference or bitterness than was ever bred by the ascetic's contemplation of heaven. Except on the ground of a primitive golden age and continuous degeneracy, I see no rational footing for scorning the whole present population of the globe, unless I scorn every previous generation from whom they have inherited their diseases of mind and body, and by consequence scorn my own scorn, which is equally an inheritance of mixed ideas and feelings concocted for me in the boiling caldron of this universally contemptible life, and so on—scorning to infinity. This may represent some actual states of mind, for it is a narrow prejudice of mathematicians to suppose that ways of thinking are to be driven out of the field by being reduced to an absurdity. The Absurd is taken as an excellent juicy thistle by many constitutions.

Reflections of this sort have gradually determined me not to grumble at the age in which I happen to have been born—a natural tendency certainly older than Hesiod. Many ancient beautiful things are lost, many ugly modern things have arisen; but invert the proposition and it is equally true. I at least am a modern with some interest in advocating tolerance, and notwithstanding an inborn beguilement which carries my affection and regret continually into an imagined past, I am aware that I must lose all sense of moral proportion unless I keep alive a stronger attachment to what is near, and a power of admiring what I best know and understand. Hence this question of wishing to be rid of one's contemporaries associates itself with my filial feeling, and calls up the thought that I might as justifiably wish that I had had other parents than those whose loving tones are my earliest memory, and whose last parting first taught me the meaning of death. I feel bound to quell such a wish as blasphemy.

Besides there are other reasons why I am contented that my father was a country parson, born much about the same time as Scott and Wordsworth; notwithstanding certain qualms I have felt at the fact that the property on which I am living was saved out of title before the period of commutation, and without the provisional transfiguration into a *modus*. It has

sometimes occurred to me when I have been taking a slice of excellent ham that, from a too tenable point of view, I was breakfasting on a small squealing black pig which, more than half a century ago, was the unwilling representative of spiritual advantages not otherwise acknowledged by the grudging farmer or dairyman who parted with him. One enters on a fearful labyrinth in tracing compound interest backward, and such complications of thought have reduced the flavor of the ham; but since I have nevertheless eaten it, the chief effect has been to moderate the severity of my radicalism (which was not part of paternal inheritance) and to raise the assuaging reflection, that if the pig and the parishioner had been intelligent enough to anticipate my historical point of view, they would have seen themselves and the rector in a light that would have made tithes voluntary. Notwithstanding such drawbacks I am rather fond of the mental furniture I got by having a father who was well acquainted with all ranks of his neighbors, and am thankful that he was not one of those aristocratic clergymen who could not have sat down to a meal with any family in the parish except my lord's—still more that he was not an earl or a marquis. A chief misfortune of high birth is that it usually shuts a man out from the large sympathetic knowledge of human experience which comes from contact with various classes on their own level, and in my father's time that entail of social ignorance had not been disturbed as we see it now. To look always from overhead at the crowd of one's fellow-men must be in many ways incapacitating, even with the best will and intelligence. The serious blunders it must lead to in the effort to manage them for their good, one may see clearly by the mistaken ways people take of flattering and enticing others whose associations are unlike their own. Hence I have always thought that the most fortunate Britons are those whose experience has given them a practical share in many aspects of the national lot, who have lived long among the mixed commonalty, roughing it with them under difficulties, knowing how their food tastes to them, and getting acquainted with their notions and motives not by inference from traditional types in literature or from philosophical theories, but from daily fellowship and observation. Of course such experience is apt to get antiquated, and my father might find himself much at a loss amongst a mixed rural population of the present day; but he knew very well what could be wisely expected from the miners, the weavers, the field-laborers, and the farmers of his own time—yes, and



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from the aristocracy, for he had been brought up in close contact with them and had been companion to a young nobleman who was deaf and dumb. "A clergyman, lad," he used to say to me, "should feel in himself a bit of every class;" and thus theory had a felicitous agreement with his inclination and practice, which certainly answered in making him beloved by his parishioners. They grumbled at their obligations towards him; but what then? It was natural to grumble at any demand for payment, tithe included, but also natural for a rector to desire his tithe and look well after the levying. A Christian pastor who did not mind about his money was not an ideal prevalent among the rural minds of fat central England, and might have seemed to introduce a dangerous laxity of supposition about Christian laymen who happened to be creditors. My father was none the less beloved because he was understood to be of a saving disposition, and how could he save without getting his tithe? The sight of him was not unwelcome at any door, and he was remarkable among the clergy of his district for having no lasting feud with rich or poor in his parish. I profited by his popularity, and for months after my mother's death, when I was a little fellow of nine, I was taken care of first at one homestead and then at another; a variety which I enjoyed much more than my stay at the Hall, where there was a tutor. Afterwards for several years I was my father's constant companion in his out-door business, riding by his side on my little pony and listening to the lengthy dialogues he held with Darby or Joan, the one on the road or in the fields, the other outside or inside her door. In my earliest remembrance of him his hair was already gray, for I was his youngest as well as his only surviving child; and it seemed to me that advanced age was appropriate to a father, as indeed in all respects I considered him a parent so much to my honor, that the mention of my relationship to him was likely to secure me regard among those to whom I was otherwise a stranger — my father's stories from his life including so many names of distant persons that my imagination placed no limit to his acquaintanceship. He was a pithy talker, and his sermons bore marks of his own composition. It is true, they must have been already old when I began to listen to them, and they were no more than a year's supply, so that they recurred as regularly as the Collects. But though this system has been much ridiculed, I am prepared to defend it as equally sound with that of a liturgy; and even if my researches had shown me that some of my father's yearly ser-

mons had been copied out from the works of elder divines, this would only have been another proof of his good judgment. One may prefer fresh eggs though laid by a fowl of the meanest understanding, but why fresh sermons?

Nor can I be sorry, though myself given to meditative if not active innovation, that my father was a Tory who had not exactly a dislike to innovators and dissenters, but a slight opinion of them as persons of ill-founded self-confidence; whence my young ears gathered many details concerning those who might perhaps have called themselves the more advanced thinkers in our nearest market-town, tending to convince me that their characters were quite as mixed as those of the thinkers behind them. This circumstance of my rearing has at least delivered me from certain mistakes of classification which I observe in many of my superiors, who have apparently no affectionate memories of a goodness mingled with what they now regard as outworn prejudices. Indeed, my philosophical notions, such as they are, continually carry me back to the time when the fitful gleams of a spring day used to show me my own shadow as that of a small boy on a small pony, riding by the side of a larger cob-mounted shadow over the breezy uplands which we used to dignify with the name of hills, or along by-roads with broad grassy borders and hedgerows reckless of utility, on our way to outlying hamlets, whose groups of inhabitants were as distinctive to my imagination as if they had belonged to different regions of the globe. From these we sometimes rode onward to the adjoining parish, where also my father officiated, for he was a pluralist, but — I hasten to add — on the smallest scale; for his one extra living was a poor vicarage, with hardly fifty parishioners, and its church would have made a very shabby barn, the gray worm-eaten wood of its pews and pulpit, with their floors only half hanging on the hinges, being exactly the color of a lean mouse which I once observed as an interesting member of the scant congregation, and conjectured to be the identical church mouse I had heard referred to as an example of extreme poverty; for I was a precocious boy, and often reasoned after the fashion of my elders, arguing that "Jack and Jill" were real personages in our parish, and that if I could identify "Jack" I should find on him the marks of a broken crown.

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back among my father's parishioners while I am still conscious of elbowing men who wear the same evening uniform as myself; and I presently begin to wonder what varieties of history lie hidden under this monotony of aspect. Some of them, perhaps, belong to families with many quarterings; but how many "quarterings" of diverse contact with their fellow-countrymen enter into their qualifications to be parliamentary leaders, professors of social science, or journalistic guides of the popular mind? Not that I feel myself a person made competent by experience; on the contrary, I argue that since an observation of different ranks has still left me practically a poor creature, what must be the condition of those who object even to read about the life of other British classes than their own? But of my elbowing neighbors with their crush hats, I usually imagine that the most distinguished among them have probably had a far more instructive journey into manhood than mine. Here, perhaps, is a thought-worn physiognomy, seeming at the present moment to be classed as a mere species of white cravat and swallow-tail, which may once, like Faraday's, have shown itself in curiously dubious embryonic form leaning against a cottage lintel in small corduroys, and hungrily eating a bit of brown bread and bacon; *there* is a pair of eyes, now too much wearied by the gas-light of public assemblies, that once perhaps learned to read their native England through the same alphabet as mine—not within the boundaries of an ancestral park, never even being driven through the country town five miles off, but—among the midland villages and markets, along by the tree-studded hedgerows, and where the heavy barges seem in the distance to float mysteriously among the rushes and the feathered grass. Our vision, both real and ideal, has since then been filled with far other scenes: among eternal snows and stupendous sun-scorched monuments of departed empires; within the scent of the long orange-groves; and where the temple of Neptune looks out over the siren-haunted sea. But my eyes at least have kept their early affectionate joy in our native landscape, which is one deep root of our national life and language.

And I often smile at my consciousness that certain conservative prepossessions have mingled themselves for me with the influences of our midland scenery, from the tops of the elms down to the buttercups and the little wayside vetches. Naturally enough. That part of my father's prime to which he ofteneast referred had fallen on the days when the great

wave of political enthusiasm and belief in a speedy regeneration of all things had ebbed, and the supposed millennial initiative of France was turning into a Napoleonic empire, the sway of an Attila with a mouth speaking proud things in a jargon half revolutionary, half Romain. Men were beginning to shrink timidly from the memory of their own words and from the recognition of the fellowships they had formed ten years before; and even reforming Englishmen for the most part were willing to wait for the perfection of society, if only they could keep their throats perfect and help to drive away the chief enemy of mankind from our coasts. To my father's mind the noisy teachers of revolutionary doctrine were, to speak mildly, a variable mixture of the fool and the scoundrel; the welfare of the nation lay in a strong Government which could maintain order; and I was accustomed to hear him utter the word "Government" in a tone that charged it with awe, and made it part of my effective religion, in contrast with the word "rebel," which seemed to carry the stamp of evil in its syllables, and, lit by the fact that Satan was the first rebel, made an argument dispensing with more detailed inquiry. I gathered that our national troubles in the first two decades of this century were not at all due to the mistakes of our administrators; and that England, with its fine Church and Constitution, would have been exceedingly well off if every British subject had been thankful for what was provided, and had minded his own business—if, for example, numerous Catholics of that period had been aware how very modest they ought to be considering they were Irish. The times, I heard, had often been bad; but I was constantly hearing of "bad times" as a name for actual evenings and mornings when the godfathers who gave them that name appeared to me remarkably comfortable. Altogether, my father's England seemed to me lovable, laudable, full of good men, and having good rulers, from Mr. Pitt on to the Duke of Wellington, until he was for emancipating the Catholics; and it was so far from prosaic to me that I looked into it for a more exciting romance than such as I could find in my own adventures, which consisted mainly in fancied crises calling for the resolute wielding of domestic swords and firearms against unapparent robbers, rioters, and invaders who, it seemed, in my father's prime had more chance of being real. The morris-dancers had not then dwindled to a ragged and almost vanished rout (owing the traditional name probably to the historic fancy of our superannuated groom); also the good old



king was alive and well, which made all the more difference because I had no notion what he was and did — only understanding in general that if he had been still on the throne he would have hindered everything that wise persons thought undesirable.

Certainly that elder England with its frankly salable boroughs, so cheap compared with the seats obtained under the reformed method, and its boroughs kindly presented by noblemen desirous to encourage gratitude; its prisons with a miscellaneous company of felons and maniacs and without any supply of water; its bloated, idle charities; its non-resident, jovial clergy; its militia-balloting; and above all, its blank ignorance of what we, its posterity, should be thinking of it, — has great differences from the England of to-day. Yet we discern a strong family likeness. Is there any country which shows at once as much stability and as much susceptibility to change as ours? Our national life is like that scenery which I early learned to love, not subject to great convulsions, but easily showing more or less delicate (sometimes melancholy) effects from minor changes. Hence our midland plains have never lost their familiar expression and conservative spirit for me; yet at every other mile, since I first looked on them, some sign of world-wide change, some new direction of human labor has wrought itself into what one may call the speech of the landscape — in contrast with those grander and vaster regions of the earth which keep an indifferent aspect in the presence of men's toil and devices. What does it signify that a lilliputian train passes over a viaduct amidst the abysses of the Apennines, or that a caravan laden with a nation's offerings creeps across the unresting sameness of the desert, or that a petty cloud of steam sweeps for an instant over the face of an Egyptian colossus immovably submitting to its slow burial beneath the sand? But our woodlands and pastures, our hedge-parted corn-fields and meadows, our bits of high common where we used to plant the windmills, our quiet little rivers here and there fit to turn a mill-wheel, our villages along the old coach-roads, are all easily alterable lineaments that seem to make the face of our Motherland sympathetic with the laborious lives of her children. She does not take their ploughs and wagons contemptuously, but rather makes every hovel and every sheep-fold, every railed bridge or fallen tree-trunk an agreeably noticeable incident; not a mere speck in the midst of unmeasured vastness, but a piece of our social history in pictorial writing.

Our rural tracts — where no Babel-chimney scales the heavens — are without mighty objects to fill the soul with the sense of an outer world unconquerably aloof from our efforts. The wastes are playgrounds (and let us try to keep them such for the children's children who will inherit no other sort of demesne); the grasses and reeds nod to each other over the river, but we have cut a canal close by; the very heights laugh with corn in August or lift the plough-team against the sky in September. Then comes a crowd of burly navvies with pickaxes and barrows, and while hardly a wrinkle is made in the fading mother's face or a new curve of health in the blooming girl's, the hills are cut through or the breaches between them spanned, we choose our level and the white steam-pennon flies along it.

But because our land shows this readiness to be changed, all signs of permanence upon it raise a tender attachment instead of awe: some of us, at least, love the scanty relics of our forests, and are thankful if a bush is left of the old hedgerow. A crumbling bit of wall where the delicate ivy-leaved toad-flax hangs its light branches, or a bit of gray thatch with patches of dark moss on its shoulder and a troop of grass-stems on its ridge, is a thing to visit. And then the tiled roof of cottage and homestead, of the long cow-shed where generations of the milky mothers have stood patiently, of the broad-shouldered barns where the old-fashioned flail once made resonant music, while the watch-dog barked at the timidly venturesome fowls making pecking raids on the out-flying grain — the roofs that have looked out from among the elms and walnut-trees, or beside the yearly group of hay and corn stacks, or below the square stone steeple, gathering their gray or ochre-tinted lichens and their olive-green mosses under all ministries, — let us praise the sober harmonies they give to our landscape, helping to unite us pleasantly with the elder generations who tilled the soil for us before we were born, and paid heavier and heavier taxes, with much grumbling, but without that deepest root of corruption — the self-indulgent despair which cuts down and consumes and never plants.

But I check myself. Perhaps this England of my affections is half visionary — a dream in which things are connected according to my well-fed, lazy mood, and not at all by the multitudinous links of graver, sadder fact, such as belong everywhere to the story of human labor. Well, well, the illusions that began for us when we were less acquainted with

evil have not lost their value when we discern them to be illusions. They feed the ideal Better, and in loving them still, we strengthen the precious habit of loving something not visibly, tangibly existent, but a spiritual product of our visible tangible selves.

I cherish my childish loves — the memory of that warm little nest where my affections were fledged. Since then I have learned to care for foreign countries, for literatures foreign and ancient, for the life of Continental towns dozing round old cathedrals, for the life of London, half sleepless with eager thought and strife, with indigestion or with hunger; and now my consciousness is chiefly of the busy, anxious metropolitan sort. My system responds sensitively to the London weather-signs, political, social, literary; and my bachelor's hearth is imbedded where by much craning of head and neck I can catch sight of a sycamore in the Square garden: I belong to the "Nation of London." Why? There have been many voluntary exiles in the world, and probably in the very first exodus of the patriarchal Aryans — for I am determined not to fetch my examples from races whose talk is of uncles and no fathers — some of those who sallied forth went for the sake of a loved companionship, when they would willingly have kept sight of the familiar plains, and of the hills to which they had first lifted up their eyes.

### III.

#### HOW WE ENCOURAGE RESEARCH.

THE serene and beneficent goddess Truth, like other deities whose disposition has been too hastily inferred from that of the men who have invoked them, can hardly be well pleased with much of the worship paid to her even in this milder age, when the stake and the rack have ceased to form part of her ritual. Some cruelties still pass for service done in her honor: no thumb-screw is used, no iron boot, no scorching of flesh; but plenty of controversial bruising, laceration, and even life-long maiming. Less than formerly; but so long as this sort of truth-worship has the sanction of a public that can often understand nothing in a controversy except personal sarcasm or slanderous ridicule, it is likely to continue. The sufferings of its victims are often as little regarded as those of the sacrificial pig offered in old time, with what we now regard as a sad miscalculation of effects.

One such victim is my old acquaintance Merman. Twenty years ago Merman was a young man of promise, a conveyancer with a practice which had certainly budded, but, unlike Aaron's rod, seemed not destined to proceed further in that marvellous activity. Meanwhile he occupied himself in miscellaneous periodical writing and in a multifarious study of moral and physical science. What chiefly attracted him in all subjects were the vexed questions which have the advantage of not admitting the decisive proof or disproof that renders many ingenious arguments superannuated. Not that Merman had a wrangling disposition: he put all his doubts, queries, and paradoxes deferentially, contended without unpleasant heat and only with a sonorous eagerness against the personality of Homer, expressed himself civilly though firmly on the origin of language, and had tact enough to drop at the right moment such subjects as the ultimate reduction of all the so-called elementary substances, his own total scepticism concerning Manetho's chronology, or even the relation between the magnetic condition of the earth and the outbreak of revo-

lutionary tendencies. Such flexibility was naturally much helped by his amiable feeling towards woman, whose nervous system, he was convinced, would not bear the continuous strain of difficult topics; and also by his willingness to contribute a song whenever the same desultory charmer proposed music. Indeed his tastes were domestic enough to beguile him into marriage when his resources were still very moderate and partly uncertain. His friends wished that so ingenious and agreeable a fellow might have more prosperity than they ventured to hope for him, their chief regret on his account being that he did not concentrate his talent and leave off forming opinions on at least half a dozen of the subjects over which he scattered his attention, especially now that he had married a "nice little woman" (the generic name for acquaintances' wives when they are not markedly disagreeable). He could not, they observed, want all his various knowledge and Laputan ideas for his periodical writing which brought him most of his bread, and he would do well to use his talents in getting a speciality that would fit him for a post. Perhaps these well-disposed persons were a little rash in presuming that fitness for a post would be the surest ground for getting it; and on the whole, in now looking back on their wishes for Merman, *their chief satisfaction must be that those wishes did not contribute to the actual result.*

For in an evil hour Merman did concentrate himself. He had for many years taken into his interest the comparative history of the ancient civilizations, but it had not preoccupied him so as to narrow his generous attention to everything else. One sleepless night, however (his wife has more than once narrated to me the details of an event memorable to her as the beginning of sorrows), after spending some hours over the epoch-making work of Grampus, a new idea seized him with regard to the possible connection of certain symbolic monuments common to widely scattered races. Merman started up in bed. The night was cold, and the sudden withdrawal of warmth made his wife first dream of a snowball, and then cry, —

"What is the matter, Proteus?"

"A great matter, Julia. That fellow Grampus, whose book is cried up as a revelation, is all wrong about the Magicodumbas and the Zuzumotzis, and I have got hold of the right claw."

"Good gracious! does it matter so much? Don't drag the clothes, dear."

"It signifies this, Julia, that if I am right I shall set the world right; I shall regenerate history; I shall win the mind of Europe to a new view of social origins; I shall bruise the head of many superstitions."

"Oh no, dear, don't go too far into things. Lie down again. You have been dreaming. What are the *Madicojumbras* and *Znizitotzums*? I never heard you talk of them before. What use can it be troubling yourself about such things?"

"That is the way, Julia — that is the way wives alienate their husbands, and make any hearth pleasanter to him than his own!"

"What *do* you mean, Proteus?"

"Why, if a woman will not try to understand her husband's ideas, or at least to believe that they are of more value than she can understand — if she is to join anybody who happens to be against him, and suppose he is a fool because others contradict him — there is an end of our happiness. That is all I have to say."

"Oh no, Proteus, dear. I do believe what you say is right. That is my only guide. I am sure I never have any opinions in any other way: I mean about subjects. Of course there are many little things that would tease you, that you like me to judge of for myself. I know I said once that I did not want you to sing 'Oh ruddier than the cherry,' because it was not in your voice. But I cannot remember ever differing from you about *subjects*. I never in my life thought any one cleverer than you."

Julia Merinan was really a "nice little woman," not one of the stately *Dians* sometimes spoken of in those terms. Her black *silhouette* had a very infantine aspect, but she had discernment and wisdom enough to act on the strong hint of that memorable conversation, never again giving her husband the slightest ground for suspecting that she thought treasonably of his ideas in relation to the *Magicojumbras* and *Znuzmotzis*, or in the least relaxed her faith in his infallibility because Europe was not also convinced of it. It was well for her that she did not increase her troubles in this way; but to do her justice, what she was chiefly anxious about was to avoid increasing her husband's troubles.

Not that these were great in the beginning. In the first development and writing out of his scheme, Merinan had a more intense kind of intellectual pleasure than he had ever known before. His face became more radiant, his general view of human prospects more cheerful. Foreseeing that

truth as presented by himself would win the recognition of his contemporaries, he excused with much liberality their rather rough treatment of other theorists whose basis was less perfect. His own periodical criticisms had never before been so amiable: he was sorry for that unlucky majority whom the spirit of the age, or some other prompting more definite and local, compelled to write without any particular ideas. The possession of an original theory which has not yet been assailed must certainly sweeten the temper of a man who is not beforehand ill-natured. And Merman was the reverse of ill-natured.

But the hour of publication came; and to half a dozen persons, described as the learned world of two hemispheres, it became known that Grampus was attacked. This might have been a small matter; for who or what on earth that is good for anything is not assailed by ignorance, stupidity, or malice — and sometimes even by just objection? But on examination it appeared that the attack might possibly be held damaging, unless the ignorance of the author were well exposed and his pretended facts shown to be chimeras of that remarkably hideous kind begotten by imperfect learning on the more feminine element of original incapacity. Grampus himself did not immediately cut open the volume which Merman had been careful to send him, not without a very lively and shifting conception of the possible effects which the explosive gift might produce on the too eminent scholar — effects that must certainly have set in on the third day from the despatch of the parcel. But in point of fact Grampus knew nothing of the book until his friend Lord Narwhal sent him an American newspaper containing a spirited article by the well-known Professor Sperin N. Whale which was rather equivocal in its bearing, the passages quoted from Merman being of rather a telling sort, and the paragraphs which seemed to blow defiance being unaccountably feeble, coming from so distinguished a Cetacean. Then, by another post, arrived letters from Butzkopf and Dugong, both men whose signatures were familiar to the Teutonic world in the *Selten-erscheinende Monat-schrift* or Hayrick for the insertion of Split Hairs, asking their Master whether he meant to take up the combat, because, in the contrary case, both were ready.

Thus America and Germany were roused, though England was still drowsy, and it seemed time now for Grampus to find Merman's book under the heap and cut it open. For his own part he was perfectly at ease about his system; but this is a

world in which the truth requires defence, and specious falsehood must be met with exposure. Grampus having once looked through the book, no longer wanted any urging to write the most crushing of replies. This, and nothing less than this, was due from him to the cause of sound inquiry; and the punishment would cost him little pains. In three weeks from that time the palpitating Merman saw his book announced in the programme of the leading *Review*. No need for Grampus to put his signature. Who else had his vast yet microscopic knowledge, who else his power of epithet? This article in which Merman was pilloried and as good as mutilated—for he was shown to have neither ear nor nose for the subtleties of philological and archæological study—was much read and more talked of, not because of any interest in the system of Grampus, or any precise conception of the danger attending lax views of the *Magioodumbras* and *Zuzumotzis*, but because the sharp epigrams with which the victim was lacerated, and the soaring fountains of acrid mud which were shot upward and poured over the fresh wounds, were found amusing in recital. A favorite passage was one in which a certain kind of sciolist was described as a creature of the Walrus kind, having a phantasmal resemblance to higher animals when seen by ignorant minds in the twilight, dabbling or hobbling in first one element and then the other, without parts or organs suited to either, in fact one of Nature's impostors who could not be said to have any artful pretences, since a congenital incompetence to all precision of aim and movement made their every action a pretence—just as a being born in doeskin gloves would necessarily pass a judgment on surfaces, but we all know what his judgment would be worth. In drawing-room circles, and for the immediate hour, this ingenious comparison was as damaging as the showing up of Merman's mistakes and the mere smattering of linguistic and historical knowledge which he had presumed to be a sufficient basis for theorizing; but the more learned cited his blunders aside to each other and laughed the laugh of the initiated. In fact, Merman's was a remarkable case of sudden notoriety. In London drums and clubs he was spoken of abundantly as one who had written ridiculously about the *Magioodumbras* and *Zuzumotzis*: the leaders of conversation, whether Christians, Jews, infidels, or of any other confession except the confession of ignorance, pronouncing him shallow and indiscreet if not presumptuous and absurd. He was heard of at Warsaw, and even Paris took



knowledge of him. M. Cachalot had not read either Grampus or Merman, but he heard of their dispute in time to insert a paragraph upon it in his brilliant work, *L'orient au point de vue actuel*, in which he was dispassionate enough to speak of Grampus as possessing a *coup d'œil presque français* in matters of historical interpretation, and of Merman as nevertheless an objector *qui mérite d'être connu*. M. Porpesse, also, availing himself of M. Cachalot's knowledge, reproduced it in an article with certain additions, which it is only fair to distinguish as his own, implying that the vigorous English of Grampus was not always as correct as a Frenchman could desire, while Merman's objections were more sophistical than solid. Presently, indeed, there appeared an able *extrait* of Grampus's article in the valuable *Rapporteur scientifique et historique*, and Merman's mistakes were thus brought under the notice of certain Frenchmen who are among the masters of those who know on oriental subjects. In a word, Merman, though not extensively read, was extensively read about.

Meanwhile, how did he like it? Perhaps nobody, except his wife, for a moment reflected on that. An amused society considered that he was severely punished, but did not take the trouble to imagine his sensations; indeed this would have been a difficulty for persons less sensitive and excitable than Merman himself. Perhaps that popular comparison of the Walrus had truth enough to bite and blister on thorough application, even if exultant ignorance had not applauded it. But it is well known that the walrus, though not in the least a malignant animal, if allowed to display its remarkably plain person and blundering performances at ease in any element it chooses, becomes desperately savage and musters alarming auxiliaries when attacked or hurt. In this characteristic, at least, Merman resembles the walrus. And now he concentrated himself with a vengeance. That his counter-theory was fundamentally the right one he had a genuine conviction, whatever collateral mistakes he might have committed; and his bread would not cease to be bitter to him until he had convinced his contemporaries that Grampus had used his minute learning as a dust-cloud to hide sophistical evasions — that, in fact, minute learning was an obstacle to clear-sighted judgment, more especially with regard to the Magicodumbras and Zuzumotzis, and that the best preparation in this matter was a wide survey of history, and a diversified observation of men. Still, Merman was resolved to muster all the learning within his reach, and he wandered day and night through many wil-

dernesses of German print, he tried compendious methods of learning oriental tongues, and, so to speak, getting at the marrow of languages independently of the bones, for the chance of finding details to corroborate his own views, or possibly even to detect Grampus in some oversight or textual tampering. All other work was neglected: rare clients were sent away and amazed editors found this maniac indifferent to his chance of getting book-parcels from them. It was many months before Merman had satisfied himself that he was strong enough to face round upon his adversary. But at last he had prepared sixty condensed pages of eager argument which seemed to him worthy to rank with the best models of controversial writing. He had acknowledged his mistakes, but he had re-stated his theory so as to show that it was left intact in spite of them; and he had even found cases in which Ziphilus, Microps, Scrag Whale the explorer, and other Cetaceans of unanswerable authority, were decidedly at issue with Grampus. Especially a passage cited by this last from that greatest of fossils *Megalosaurus* was demonstrated by Merman to be capable of three different interpretations, all preferable to that chosen by Grampus, who took the words in their most literal sense; for, 1°, the incomparable Saurian, alike unequalled in close observation and far-glancing comprehensiveness, might have meant those words ironically; 2°, *motzis* was probably a false reading for *potzis*, in which case its bearing was reversed; and 3°, it is known that in the age of the Saurians there were conceptions about the *motzis* which entirely remove it from the category of things comprehensible in an age when Saurians run ridiculously small: all which views were godfathered by names quite fit to be ranked with that of Grampus. In fine, Merman wound up his rejoinder by sincerely thanking the eminent adversary without whose fierce assault he might not have undertaken a revision in the course of which he had met with unexpected and striking confirmations of his own fundamental views. Evidently Merman's anger was at white heat.

The rejoinder being complete, all that remained was to find a suitable medium for its publication. This was not so easy. Distinguished mediums would not lend themselves to contradictions of Grampus, or if they would, Merman's article was too long and too abstruse, while he would not consent to leave anything out of an article which had no superfluities; for all this happened years ago when the world was at a different stage. At last, however, he got his rejoinder printed, and not

on hard terms, since the medium, in every sense modest, did not ask him to pay for its insertion.

But if Merman expected to call out Grampus again, he was mistaken. Everybody felt it too absurd that Merman should undertake to correct Grampus in matters of erudition, and an eminent man has something else to do than to refute a petty objector twice over. What was essential had been done: the public had been enabled to form a true judgment of Merman's incapacity, the Magicodumbras and Zuzuimotzis were but subsidiary elements in Grampus's system, and Merman might now be dealt with by younger members of the master's school. But he had at least the satisfaction of finding that he had raised a discussion which would not be let die. The followers of Grampus took it up with an ardor and industry of research worthy of their exemplar. Butzkopf made it the subject of an elaborate *Einleitung* to his important work, *Die Bedeutung des Ägyptischen Labyrinthes*; and Dugong, in a remarkable address which he delivered to a learned society in Central Europe, introduced Merman's theory with so much power of sarcasm that it became a theme of more or less derisive allusion to men of many tongues. Merman with his Magicodumbras and Zuzumotzis was on the way to become a proverb, being used illustratively by many able journalists who took those names of questionable things to be Merman's own invention, "than which," said one of the graver guides, "we can recall few more melancholy examples of speculative aberration." Naturally the subject passed into popular literature, and figured very commonly in advertised programmes. The fluent Loligo, the formidable Shark, and a younger member of his remarkable family known as S. Catulus, made a special reputation by their numerous articles, eloquent, lively, or abusive, all on the same theme, under titles ingeniously varied, alliterative, sonorous, or boldly fanciful; such as "Moments with Mr. Merman," "Mr. Merman and the Magicodumbras," "Greenland Grampus and Proteus Merman," "Grampian Heights and their Climbers, or the New Excelsior." They tossed him on short sentences; they swathed him in paragraphs of winding imagery; they found him at once a mere plagiarist and a theorizer of unexampled perversity, ridiculously wrong about *potzis* and ignorant of Pali; they hinted, indeed, at certain things which to their knowledge he had silently brooded over in his boyhood, and seemed tolerably well assured that this preposterous attempt to gainsay an incomparable Cetacean of world-wide fame had its origin in a

peculiar mixture of bitterness and eccentricity which, rightly estimated and seen in its definite proportions, would furnish the best key to his argumentation. All alike were sorry for Merman's lack of sound learning, but how could their readers be sorry? Sound learning would not have been amusing; and as it was, Merman was made to furnish these readers with amusement at no expense of trouble on their part. Even burlesque writers looked into his book to see where it could be made use of, and those who did not know him were desirous of meeting him at dinner as one likely to feed their comic vein.

On the other hand, he made a serious figure in sermons under the name of "Some" or "Others" who had attempted presumptuously to scale eminences too high and arduous for human ability, and had given an example of ignominious failure edifying to the humble Christian.

All this might be very advantageous for able persons whose superfluous fund of expression needed a paying investment, but the effect on Merman himself was unhappily not so transient as the busy writing and speaking of which he had become the occasion. His certainty that he was right naturally got stronger in proportion as the spirit of resistance was stimulated. The scorn and unfairness with which he felt himself to have been treated by those really competent to appreciate his ideas had galled him and made a chronic sore; and the exultant chorus of the incompetent seemed a pouring of vinegar on his wound. His brain became a registry of the foolish and ignorant objections made against him, and of continually amplified answers to these objections. Unable to get his answers printed, he had recourse to that more primitive mode of publication, oral transmission or button-holding, now generally regarded as a troublesome survival, and the once pleasant, flexible Merman was on the way to be shinned as a bore. His interest in new acquaintances turned chiefly on the possibility that they would care about the *Magiodumbras* and *Zuzumotzis*; that they would listen to his complaints and exposures of unfairness, and not only accept copies of what he had written on the subject, but send him appreciative letters in acknowledgment. Repeated disappointment of such hopes tended to embitter him, and not the less because after a while the fashion of mentioning him died out, allusions to his theory were less understood, and people could only pretend to remember it. And all the while Merman was perfectly sure that his very opponents who had knowledge enough to be capable

judges were aware that his book, whatever errors of statement they might detect in it, had served as a sort of divining rod, pointing out hidden sources of historical interpretation; nay, his jealous examination discerned in a new work by Grampus himself a certain shifting of ground which — so poor Merman declared — was the sign of an intention gradually to appropriate the views of the man he had attempted to brand as an ignorant imposter.

And Julia? And the housekeeping? — the rent, food, and clothing, which controversy can hardly supply unless it be of the kind that serves as a recommendation to certain posts. Controversial pamphlets have been known to earn large plums; but nothing of the sort could be expected from unpractical heresies about the Magicodumbras and Zuzumotzis. Painfully the contrary. Merman's reputation as a sober thinker, a safe writer, a sound lawyer, was irretrievably injured: the distractions of controversy had caused him to neglect useful editorial connections, and indeed his dwindling care for miscellaneous subjects made his contributions too dull to be desirable. Even if he could now have given a new turn to his concentration, and applied his talents so as to be ready to show himself an exceptionally qualified lawyer, he would only have been like an architect in competition, too late with his superior plans: he would not have had an opportunity of showing his qualification. He was thrown out of the course. The small capital which had filled up deficiencies of income was almost exhausted, and Julia, in the effort to make supplies equal to wants, had to use much ingenuity in diminishing the wants. The brave and affectionate woman whose small outline, so unimpressive against an illuminated background, held within it a good share of feminine heroism, did her best to keep up the charm of home and soothe her husband's excitement; parting with the best jewel among her wedding presents in order to pay rent, without ever hinting to her husband that this sad result had come of his undertaking to convince people who only laughed at him. She was a resigned little creature, and reflected that some husbands took to drinking and others to forgery: hers had only taken to the Magicodumbras and Zuzumotzis, and was not unkind — only a little more indifferent to her and the two children than she had ever expected he would be, his mind being eaten up with "subjects," and constantly a little angry, not with her, but with everybody else, especially those who were celebrated.

This was the sad truth. Merman felt himself ill-used by

the world, and thought very much worse of the world in consequence. The gall of his adversaries' ink had been sucked into his system and ran in his blood. He was still in the prime of life, but his mind was aged by that eager monotonous construction which comes of feverish excitement on a single topic and uses up the intellectual strength.

Merman had never been a rich man, but he was now conspicuously poor, and in need of the friends who had power or interest which he believed they could exert on his behalf. Their omitting or declining to give this help could not seem to him so clearly as to them an inevitable consequence of his having become impracticable, or at least of his passing for a man whose views were not likely to be safe and sober. Each friend in turn offended him, though unwillingly, and was suspected of wishing to shake him off. It was not altogether so; but poor Merman's society had undeniably ceased to be attractive, and it was difficult to help him. At last the pressure of want urged him to try for a post far beneath his earlier prospects, and he gained it. He holds it still, for he has no vices, and his domestic life has kept up a sweetening current of motive around and within him. Nevertheless, the bitter flavor mingling itself with all topics, the premature weariness and withering, are irrevocably there. It is as if he had gone through a disease which alters what we call the constitution. He has long ceased to talk eagerly of the ideas which possess him, or to attempt making proselytes. The dial has moved onward, and he himself sees many of his former guesses in a new light. On the other hand, he has seen what he foreboded, that the main idea which was at the root of his too rash theorizing has been adopted by Grampus and received with general respect, no reference being heard to the ridiculous figure this important conception made when ushered in by the incompetent "Others."

Now and then, on rare occasions, when a sympathetic *tête-à-tête* has restored some of his old expansiveness, he will tell a companion in a railway carriage, or other place of meeting favorable to autobiographical confidences, what has been the course of things in his particular case, as an example of the justice to be expected of the world. The companion usually allows for the bitterness of a disappointed man, and is secretly disinclined to believe that Grampus was to blame.

#### IV.

### A MAN SURPRISED AT HIS ORIGINALITY.

AMONG the many acute sayings of La Rochefoucauld, there is hardly one more acute than this: "*La plus grande ambition n'en a pas la moindre apparence lorsqu'elle se rencontre dans une impossibilité absolue d'arriver où elle aspire.*" Some of us might do well to use this hint in our treatment of acquaintances and friends from whom we are expecting gratitude because we are so very kind in thinking of them, inviting them, and even listening to what they say — considering how insignificant they must feel themselves to be. We are often fallaciously confident in supposing that our friend's state of mind is appropriate to our moderate estimate of his importance: almost as if we imagined the humble mollusk (so useful as an illustration) to have a sense of his own exceeding softness and low place in the scale of being. Your mollusk, on the contrary, is inwardly objecting to every other grade of solid rather than to himself. Accustomed to observe what we think an unwarrantable conceit exhibiting itself in ridiculous pretensions and forwardness to play the lion's part, in obvious self-complacency and loud peremptoriness, we are not on the alert to detect the egoistic claims of a more exorbitant kind often hidden under an apparent neutrality or an acquiescence in being put out of the question.

Thoughts of this kind occurred to me yesterday when I saw the name of Lentulus in the obituary. The majority of his acquaintances, I imagine, have always thought of him as a man justly unpretending and as nobody's rival; but some of them have perhaps been struck with surprise at his reserve in praising the works of his contemporaries, and have now and then felt themselves in need of a key to his remarks on men of celebrity in various departments. He was a man of fair position, deriving his income from a business in which he did nothing, at leisure to frequent clubs and at ease in giving dinners; well-looking, polite, and generally acceptable in society as a part of what we may call its bread-crumbs — the neutral

basis needful for the plums and spice. Why, then, did he speak of the modern Maro or the modern Flaccus with a peculiarity in his tone of assent to other people's praise which might almost have led you to suppose that the eminent poet had borrowed money of him and showed an indisposition to repay? He had no criticism to offer, no sign of objection more specific than a slight cough, a scarcely perceptible pause before assenting, and an air of self-control in his utterance — as if certain considerations had determined him not to inform against the so-called poet, who to his knowledge was a mere versifier. If you had questioned him closely, he would perhaps have confessed that he did think something better might be done in the way of Eclogues and Georgics, or of Odes and Epodes, and that to his mind poetry was something very different from what had hitherto been known under that name.

For my own part, being of a superstitious nature, given readily to imagine alarming causes, I immediately, on first getting these mystic hints from Lentulus, concluded that he held a number of entirely original poems, or at the very least a revolutionary treatise on poetics, in that melancholy manuscript state to which works excelling all that is ever printed are necessarily condemned; and I was long timid in speaking of the poets when he was present. For what might not Lentulus have done, or be profoundly aware of, that would make my ignorant impressions ridiculous? One cannot well be sure of the negative in such a case, except through certain positives that bear witness to it; and those witnesses are not always to be got hold of. But time wearing on, I perceived that the attitude of Lentulus towards the philosophers was essentially the same as his attitude towards the poets; nay, there was something so much more decided in his mode of closing his mouth after brief speech on the former, there was such an air of rapt consciousness in his private hints as to his conviction that all thinking hitherto had been an elaborate mistake, and as to his own power of conceiving a sound basis for a lasting superstructure, that I began to believe less in the poetical stores, and to infer that the line of Lentulus lay rather in the rational criticism of our beliefs and in systematic construction. In this case I did not figure to myself the existence of formidable manuscripts ready for the press; for great thinkers are known to carry their theories growing within their minds long before committing them to paper, and the ideas which made a new passion for them when their locks were jet or auburn, remain perilously unwritten, an



inwardly developing condition of their successive selves, until the locks are gray or scanty. I only meditated improvingly on the way in which a man of exceptional faculties, and even carrying within him some of that fierce refiner's fire which is to purge away the dross of human error, may move about in society totally unrecognized, regarded as a person whose opinion is superfluous, and only rising into a power in emergencies of threatened black-balling. Imagine a Descartes or a Locke being recognized for nothing more than a good fellow and a perfect gentleman — what a painful view does such a picture suggest of impenetrable dullness in the society around them !

I would at all times rather be reduced to a cheaper estimate of a particular person, if by that means I can get a more cheerful view of my fellow-men generally ; and I confess that in a certain curiosity which led me to cultivate Lentulus's acquaintance, my hope leaned to the discovery that he was a less remarkable man than he had seemed to imply. It would have been a grief to discover that he was bitter or malicious but by finding him to be neither a mighty poet, nor a revolutionary poetical critic, nor an epoch-making philosopher, my admiration for the poets and thinkers whom he rated so low would recover all its buoyancy, and I should not be left to trust to that very suspicious sort of merit which constitutes an exception in the history of mankind, and recommends itself as the total abolitionist of all previous claims on our confidence. You are not greatly surprised at the infirm logic of the coachman who would persuade you to engage him by insisting that any other would be sure to rob you in the matter of hay and corn, thus demanding a difficult belief in him as the sole exception from the frailties of his calling ; but it is rather astonishing that the wholesale decriers of mankind and its performances should be even more unwary in their reasoning than the coachman, since each of them not merely confides in your regarding himself as an exception, but overlooks the almost certain fact that you are wondering whether he inwardly excepts *you*. Now, conscious of entertaining some common opinions which seemed to fall under the mildly intimated but sweeping ban of Lentulus, my self-complacency was a little concerned.

Hence I deliberately attempted to draw out Lentulus in private dialogue, for it is the reverse of injury to a man to offer him that hearing which he seems to have found nowhere else. And for whatever purposes silence may be equal to

gold, it cannot be safely taken as an indication of specific ideas. I sought to know why Lentulus was more than indifferent to the poets, and what was that new poetry which he had either written or, as to its principles, distinctly conceived. But I presently found that he knew very little of any particular poet, and had a general notion of poetry as the use of artificial language to express unreal sentiments: he instanceed "The Giaour," "Lalla Rookh," "The Pleasures of Hope," and "Ruin seize thee, ruthless King;" adding, "and plenty more." On my observing that he probably preferred a larger, simpler style, he emphatically assented. "Have you not," said I, "written something of that order?"—"No; but I often compose as I go along. I see how things might be written as fine as Ossian, only with true ideas. The world has no notion what poetry will be."

It was impossible to disprove this, and I am always glad to believe that the poverty of our imagination is no measure of the world's resources. Our posterity will no doubt get fuel in ways that we are unable to devise for them. But what this conversation persuaded me of was, that the birth with which the mind of Lentulus was pregnant could not be poetry, though I did not question that he composed as he went along, and that the exercise was accompanied with a great sense of power. This is a frequent experience in dreams, and much of our waking experience is but a dream in the daylight. Nay, for what I saw, the compositions might be fairly classed as Ossianic. But I was satisfied that Lentulus could not disturb my grateful admiration for the poets of all ages by eclipsing them, or by putting them under a new electric light of criticism.

Still, he had himself thrown the chief emphasis of his protest and his consciousness of corrective illumination on the philosophic thinking of our race; and his tone in assuring me that everything which had been done in that way was wrong—that Plato, Robert Owen, and Dr. Tuffle who wrote in the "Regulator," were all equally mistaken—gave my superstitious nature a thrill of anxiety. After what had passed about the poets, it did not seem likely that Lentulus had all systems by heart; but who could say he had not seized that thread which may somewhere hang out loosely from the web of things and be the clew of unravelment? We need not go far to learn that a prophet is not made by erudition. Lentulus at least had not the bias of a school; and if it turned out that he was in agreement with any celebrated thinker, ancient or modern,

the agreement would have the value of an undesigned coincidence not due to forgotten reading. It was therefore with renewed curiosity that I engaged him on this large subject—the universal erroneousness of thinking up to the period when Lentulus began that process. And here I found him more copious than on the theme of poetry. He admitted that he did contemplate writing down his thoughts, but his difficulty was their abundance. Apparently he was like the woodcutter entering the thick forest and saying, "Where shall I begin?" The same obstacle appeared in a minor degree to cling about his verbal exposition, and accounted perhaps for his rather helter-skelter choice of remarks bearing on the number of unaddressed letters sent to the post-office; on what logic really is, as tending to support the buoyancy of human mediums and mahogany tables; on the probability of all miracles under all religions when explained by hidden laws, and my unreasonableness in supposing that their profuse occurrence at half a guinea an hour in recent times was anything more than a coincidence; on the haphazard way in which marriages are determined—showing the baselessness of social and moral schemes; and on his expectation that he should offend the scientific world when he told them what he thought of electricity as an agent.

No man's appearance could be graver or more gentleman-like than that of Lentulus as we walked along the Mall while he delivered these observations, understood by himself to have a regenerative bearing on human society. His wristbands and black gloves, his hat and nicely clipped hair, his landable moderation in beard, and his evident discrimination in choosing his tailor, all seemed to excuse the prevalent estimate of him as a man untainted with heterodoxy, and likely to be so unencumbered with opinions that he would always be useful as an assenting and admiring listener. Men of science seeing him at their lectures doubtless flattered themselves that he came to learn from them; the philosophic ornaments of our time, expounding some of their luminous ideas in the social circle, took the meditative gaze of Lentulus for one of surprise not unmixed with a just reverence at such close reasoning towards so novel a conclusion; and those who are called men of the world considered him a good fellow who might be asked to vote for a friend of their own and would have no troublesome notions to make him unaccommodating. You perceive how very much they were all mistaken, except in qualifying him as a good fellow.

This Lentulus certainly was, in the sense of being free from envy, hatred, and malice; and such freedom was all the more remarkable an indication of native benignity, because of his gaseous, illimitably expansive conceit. Yes, conceit; for that his enormous and contentedly ignorant confidence in his own rambling thoughts was usually clad in a decent silence, is no reason why it should be less strictly called by the name directly implying a complacent self-estimate unwarranted by performance. Nay, the total privacy in which he enjoyed his consciousness of inspiration was the very condition of its undisturbed placid nourishment and gigantic growth. Your audibly arrogant man exposes himself to tests: in attempting to make an impression on others he may possibly (not always) be made to feel his own lack of definiteness; and the demand for definiteness is to all of us a needful check on vague depreciation of what others do, and vague ecstatic trust in our own superior ability. But Lentulus was at once so unreceptive, and so little gifted with the power of displaying his unscellaneous deficiency of information, that there was really nothing to hinder his astonishment at the spontaneous crop of ideas which his mind secretly yielded. If it occurred to him that there were more meanings than one for the word "motive," since it sometimes meant the end aimed at and sometimes the feeling that prompted the aiming, and that the word "cause" was also of changeable import, he was naturally struck with the truth of his own perception, and was convinced that if this vein were well followed out much might be made of it. Men were evidently in the wrong about cause and effect, else why was society in the confused state we behold? And as to motive, Lentulus felt that when he came to write down his views he should look deeply into this kind of subject and show up thereby the anomalies of our social institutions; meanwhile the various aspects of "motive" and "cause" flitted about among the motley crowd of ideas which he regarded as original, and pregnant with reformatory efficacy. For his unaffected good-will made him regard all his insight as only valuable because it tended towards reform.

The respectable man had got into his illusory maze of discoveries by letting go that clew of conformity in his thinking which he had kept fast hold of in his tailoring and manners. He regarded heterodoxy as a power in itself, and took his inacquaintance with doctrines for a creative dissidence. But his epitaph needs not to be a melancholy one. His benevolent disposition was more effective for good than his silent

presumption for harm. He might have been mischievous but for the lack of words: instead of being astonished at his inspirations in private, he might have clad his addled originalities, disjointed commonplaces, blind denials, and balloon-like conclusions, in that mighty sort of language which would have made a new Koran for a knot of followers. I mean no disrespect to the ancient Koran, but one would not desire the rog to lay more eggs and give us a whole wing-flapping brood to soar and make twilight.

Peace be with Lentulus, for he has left us in peace. Blessed is the man who, having nothing to say, abstains from giving us wordy evidence of the fact — from calling on us to look through a heap of millet-seed in order to be sure that there is no pearl in it.

## V.

### A TOO DEFERENTIAL MAN.

A LITTLE unpremeditated insincerity must be indulged under the stress of social intercourse. The talk even of an honest man must often represent merely his wish to be inoffensive or agreeable rather than his genuine opinion or feeling on the matter in hand. His thought, if uttered, might be wounding; or he has not the ability to utter it with exactness and snatches at a loose paraphrase; or he has really no genuine thought on the question and is driven to fill up the vacancy by borrowing the remarks in vogue. These are the winds and currents we have all to steer amongst, and they are often too strong for our truthfulness or our wit. Let us not bear too hardly on each other for this common incidental frailty, or think that we rise superior to it by dropping all considerateness and deference.

But there are studious, deliberate forms of insincerity which it is fair to be impatient with: Hinze's, for example. From his name you might suppose him to be German: in fact, his family is Alsatian, but has been settled in England for more than one generation. He is the superlatively deferential man, and walks about with inurmured wonder at the wisdom and discernment of everybody who talks to him. He cultivates the low-toned *tête-à-tête*, keeping his hat carefully in his hand and often stroking it, while he smiles with downcast eyes, as if to relieve his feelings under the pressure of the remarkable conversation which it is his honor to enjoy at the present moment. I confess to some rage on hearing him yesterday talking to Felicia, who is certainly a clever woman, and, without any unusual desire to show her cleverness, occasionally says something of her own or makes an allusion which is not quite common. Still, it must happen to her as to every one else to speak of many subjects on which the best things were said long ago, and in conversation with a person who has been newly introduced those well-worn themes naturally recur as a further development of salutations and preliminary media of understanding, such as pipes, chocolate, or mastic-chewing, which serve to confirm the impression that our new acquaintance is on a civilized footing and has enough regard for formulas to

save us from shocking outbursts of individualism, to which we are always exposed with the tamest bear or baboon. Considered purely as a matter of information, it cannot any longer be important for us to learn that a British subject included in the last census holds Shakespeare to be supreme in the presentation of character; still, it is as admissible for any one to make this statement about himself as to rub his hands and tell you that the air is brisk, if only he will let it fall as a matter of course, with a parenthetic lightness, and not announce his adhesion to a commonplace with an emphatic insistence, as if it were a proof of singular insight. We mortals should chiefly like to talk to each other out of good-will and fellowship, not for the sake of hearing revelations or being stimulated by witticisms; and I have usually found that it is the rather dull person who appears to be disgusted with his contemporaries because they are not always strikingly original, and to satisfy whom the party at a country house should have included the prophet Isaiah, Plato, Francis Bacon, and Voltaire. It is always your heaviest bore who is astonished at the tameness of modern celebrities: naturally; for a little of his company has reduced them to a state of flaccid fatigue. It is right and meet that there should be an abundant utterance of good sound *commonplaces*. Part of an agreeable talker's charm is that he lets them fall continually with no more than their due emphasis. Giving a pleasant voice to what we are all well assured of, makes a sort of wholesome air for more special and dubious remark to move in.

Hence it seemed to me far from unbecoming in Felicia that in her first dialogue with Hinze, previously quite a stranger to her, her observations were those of an ordinarily refined and well-educated woman on standard subjects, and might have been printed in a manual of polite topics and creditable opinions. She had no desire to astonish a man of whom she had heard nothing particular. It was all the more exasperating to see and hear Hinze's reception of her well-bred conformities. Felicia's acquaintances know her as the suitable wife of a distinguished man, a sensible, vivacious, kindly-disposed woman, helping her husband with graceful apologies written and spoken, and making her receptions agreeable to all comers. But you would have imagined that Hinze had been prepared by general report to regard this introduction to her as an opportunity comparable to an audience of the Delphic Sibyl. When she had delivered herself on the changes in Italian travel, on the difficulty of reading Ariosto in these busy times, on the want of

equilibrium in French political affairs, and on the pre-eminence of German music, he would know what to think. Felicia was evidently embarrassed by his reverent wonder, and, in dread lest she should seem to be playing the oracle, became somewhat confused, stumbling on her answers rather than choosing them. But this made no difference to Hinze's rapt attention and subdued eagerness of inquiry. He continued to put large questions, bending his head slightly that his eyes might be a little lifted in awaiting her reply.

"What, may I ask, is your opinion as to the state of Art in England?"

"Oh," said Felicia, with a light deprecatory laugh, "I think it suffers from two diseases — bad taste in the patrons and want of inspiration in the artists."

"That is true indeed," said Hinze, in an undertone of deep conviction. "You have put your finger with strict accuracy on the causes of decline. To a cultivated taste like yours this must be particularly painful."

"I did not say there was actual decline," said Felicia, with a touch of *brusquerie*. "I don't set myself up as the great personage whom nothing can please."

"That would be too severe a misfortune for others," says my complimentary ape. "You approve, perhaps, of Rosemary's 'Babes in the Wood,' as something fresh and naïve in sculpture?"

"I think it enchanting."

"Does he know that? Or *will* you permit me to tell him?"

"Heaven forbid! It would be an impertinence in me to praise a work of his — to pronounce on its quality; and that I happen to like it can be of no consequence to him."

Here was an occasion for Hinze to smile down on his hat and stroke it — Felicia's ignorance that her praise was inestimable being peculiarly noteworthy to an observer of mankind. Presently he was quite sure that her favorite author was Shakespeare, and wished to know what she thought of Hamlet's madness. When she had quoted Wilhelm Meister on this point, and had afterwards testified that "Lear" was beyond adequate presentation, that "Julius Cæsar" was an effective acting play, and that a poet may know a good deal about human nature while knowing little of geography, Hinze appeared so impressed with the plentitude of these revelations that he recapitulated them, weaving them together with threads of compliment — "As you very justly observed:" and — "It is most true, as you say;" and — "It were well if others noted what you have remarked."



Some listeners incautious in their epithets would have called Hinze an "ass." For my part I would never insult that intelligent and unpretending animal who no doubt brays with perfect simplicity and substantial meaning to those acquainted with his idiom, and if he feigns more submission than he feels, has weighty reasons for doing so — I would never, I say, insult that historic and ill-appreciated animal, the ass, by giving his name to a man whose continuous pretence is so shallow in its motive, so unexcused by any sharp appetite as this of Hinze's.

But perhaps you would say that his adulatory manner was originally adopted under strong promptings of self-interest, and that his absurdly over-acted deference to persons from whom he expects no patronage is the unreflecting persistence of habit — just as those who live with the deaf will shout to everybody else.

And you might indeed imagine that in talking to Tulpian, who has considerable interest at his disposal, Hinze had a desired appointment in his mind. Tulpian is appealed to on innumerable subjects, and if he is unwilling to express himself on any one of them, says so with instructive copiousness: he is much listened to, and his utterances are registered and reported with more or less exactitude. But I think he has no other listener who comports himself as Hinze does — who, figuratively speaking, carries about a small spoon ready to pick up any dusty crumb of opinion that the eloquent man may have let drop. Tulpian, with reverence be it said, has some rather absurd notions, such as a mind of large discourse often finds room for: they slip about among his higher conceptions and multitudinous acquirements like disreputable characters at a national celebration in some vast cathedral, where to the ardent soul all is glorified by rainbow light and grand associations: any vulgar detective knows them for what they are. But Hinze is especially fervid in his desire to hear Tulpian dilate on his crotchets, and is rather troublesome to bystanders in asking them whether they have read the various fugitive writings in which these crotchets have been published. If an expert is explaining some matter on which you desire to know the evidence, Hinze teases you with Tulpian's guesses, and asks the expert what he thinks of them.

In general, Hinze delights in the citation of opinions, and would hardly remark that the sun shone without an air of respectful appeal or fervid adhesion. The "*Iliad*," one sees, would impress him little if it were not for what Mr. Fngleman

has lately said about it; and if you mention an image or sentiment in Chaucer he seems not to heed the bearing of your reference, but immediately tells you that Mr. Hautboy, too, regards Chaucer as a poet of the first order, and he is delighted to find that two such judges as you and Hautboy are at one.

What is the reason of all this subdued ecstasy, moving about, hat in hand, with well-dressed hair and attitudes of unimpeachable correctness? Some persons conscious of sagacity decide at once that Hinze knows what he is about in flattering Tulpian, and has a carefully appraised end to serve though they may not see it. They are misled by the common mistake of supposing that men's behavior, whether habitual or occasional, is chiefly determined by a distinctly conceived motive, a definite object to be gained or a definite evil to be avoided. The truth is, that, the primitive wants of nature once tolerably satisfied, the majority of mankind, even in a civilized life full of solicitations, are with difficulty aroused to the distinct conception of an object towards which they will direct their actions with careful adaptation, and it is yet rarer to find one who can persist in the systematic pursuit of such an end. Few lives are shaped, few characters formed, by the contemplation of definite consequences seen from a distance and made the goal of continuous effort or the beacon of a constantly avoided danger: such control by foresight, such vivid picturing and practical logic are the distinction of exceptionally strong natures; but society is chiefly made up of human beings whose daily acts are all performed either in unreflecting obedience to custom and routine or from immediate promptings of thought or feeling to execute an immediate purpose. They pay their poor-rates, give their vote in affairs political or parochial, wear a certain amount of starch, hinder boys from tormenting the helpless, and spend money on tedious observances called pleasures, without mentally adjusting these practices to their own well-understood interest or to the general, ultimate welfare of the human race; and when they fall into ungraceful compliment, excessive smiling or other luckless efforts of complaisant behavior, these are but the tricks or habits gradually formed under the successive promptings of a wish to be agreeable, stimulated day by day without any widening resources for gratifying the wish. It does not in the least follow that they are seeking by studied hypocrisy to get something for themselves. And so with Hinze's deferential bearing, complimentary parentheses, and worshipful tones, which seem to some like the overacting of a part in a

comedy. He expects no appointment or other appreciable gain through Tulpian's favor; he has no doubleness towards Felicia; there is no sneering or backbiting obverse to his ecstatic admiration. He is very well off in the world, and cherishes no unsatisfied ambition that could feed design and direct flattery. As you perceive, he has had the education and other advantages of a gentleman without being conscious of marked result, such as a decided preference for any particular ideas or functions: his mind is furnished as hotels are, with everything for occasional and transient use. But one cannot be an Englishman and gentleman in general: it is in the nature of things that one must have an individuality, though it may be of an often-repeated type. As Hinze in growing to maturity had grown into a particular form and expression of person, so he necessarily gathered a manner and frame of speech which made him additionally recognizable. His nature is not tuned to the pitch of a genuine direct admiration, only to an attitudinizing deference which does not fatigue itself with the formation of real judgments. All human achievement must be wrought down to this spoon-meat — this mixture of other persons' washy opinions and his own flux of reverence for what is third-hand, before Hinze can find a relish for it.

He has no more leading characteristic than the desire to stand well with those who are justly distinguished; he has no base admirations, and you may know by his entire presentation of himself, from the management of his hat to the angle at which he keeps his right foot, that he aspires to correctness. Desiring to behave becomingly and also to make a figure in dialogue, he is only like the bad artist whose picture is a failure. We may pity these ill-gifted strivers, but not pretend that their works are pleasant to behold. A man is bound to know something of his own weight and muscular dexterity, and the puny athlete is called foolish before he is seen to be thrown. Hinze has not the stuff in him to be at once agreeably conversational and sincere, and he has got himself up to be at all events agreeably conversational. Notwithstanding this deliberateness of intention in his talk he is unconscious of falsity, for he has not enough of deep and lasting impression to find a contrast or diversity between his words and his thoughts. He is not fairly to be called a hypocrite, but I have already confessed to the more exasperation at his make-believe reverence, because it has no deep hunger to excuse it.

## VI.

### ONLY TEMPER.

WHAT is temper? Its primary meaning, the proportion and mode in which qualities are mingled, is much neglected in popular speech, yet even here the word often carries a reference to an habitual state or general tendency of the organism in distinction from what are held to be specific virtues and vices. As people confess to bad memory without expecting to sink in mental reputation, so we hear a man declared to have a bad temper and yet glorified as the possessor of every high quality. When he errs or in any way commits himself, his temper is accused, not his character, and it is understood that but for a brutal bearish mood he is kindness itself. If he kicks small animals, swears violently at a servant who mistakes orders, or is grossly rude to his wife, it is remarked apologetically that these things mean nothing — they are all temper.

Certainly there is a limit to this form of apology, and the forgery of a bill, or the ordering of goods without any prospect of paying for them, has never been set down to an unfortunate habit of sulkiness or of irascibility. But on the whole there is a peculiar exercise of indulgence towards the manifestations of bad temper which tends to encourage them, so that we are in danger of having among us a number of virtuous persons who conduct themselves detestably, just as we have hysterical patients who, with sound organs, are apparently laboring under many sorts of organic disease. Let it be admitted, however, that a man may be "a good fellow" and yet have a bad temper, so bad that we recognize his merits with reluctance, and are inclined to resent his occasionally amiable behavior as an unfair demand on our admiration.

Touchwood is that kind of good fellow. He is by turns insolent, quarrelsome, repulsively haughty to innocent people who approach him with respect, neglectful of his friends, angry in face of legitimate demands, procrastinating in the

fulfilment of such demands, prompted to rude words and harsh looks by a moody disgust with his fellow-men in general — and yet, as everybody will assure you, the soul of honor, a steadfast friend, a defender of the oppressed, an affectionate-hearted creature. Pity that, after a certain experience of his moods, his intimacy becomes insupportable! A man who uses his balmorals to tread on your toes with much frequency and an unmistakable emphasis may prove a fast friend in adversity, but meanwhile your adversity has not arrived and your toes are tender. The daily sneer or growl at your remarks is not to be made amends for by a possible eulogy or defence of your undertaking against depreciators who may not present themselves, and on an occasion which may never arise. I cannot submit to a chronic state of blue and green bruisse as a form of insurance against an accident.

Touchwood's bad temper is of the contradicting pugnacious sort. He is the honorable gentleman in opposition, whatever proposal or proposition may be broached, and when others join him he secretly damns their superfluous agreement, quickly discovering that his way of stating the case is not exactly theirs. An invitation or any sign of expectation throws him into an attitude of refusal. Ask his concurrence in a benevolent measure: he will not decline to give it, because he has a real sympathy with good aims; but he complies resentfully, though where he is let alone he will do much more than any one would have thought of asking for. No man would shrink with greater sensitiveness from the imputation of not paying his debts, yet when a bill is sent in with any promptitude he is inclined to make the tradesman wait for the money he is in such a hurry to get. One sees that this antagonistic temper must be much relieved by finding a particular object, and that its worst moments must be those where the mood is that of vague resistance, there being nothing specific to oppose. Touchwood is never so little engaging as when he comes down to breakfast with a cloud on his brow, after parting from you the night before with an affectionate effusiveness at the end of a confidential conversation which has assured you of mutual understanding. Impossible that you can have committed any offence. If mice have disturbed him, that is not your fault; but, nevertheless, your cheerful greeting had better not convey any reference to the weather, else it will be met by a sneer which, taking you unawares, may give you a crushing sense that you make a poor figure with your cheerfulness, which was not asked for. Some daring person perhaps intro-

duces another topic, and uses the delicate flattery of appealing to Touchwood for his opinion, the topic being included in his favorite studies. An indistinct muttering, with a look at the carving-knife in reply, teaches that daring person how ill he has chosen a market for his deference. If Touchwood's behavior affects you very closely you had better break your leg in the course of the day : his bad temper will then vanish at once ; he will take a painful journey on your behalf ; he will sit up with you night after night ; he will do all the work of your department so as to save you from any loss in consequence of your accident ; he will be even uniformly tender to you till you are well on your legs again, when he will some fine morning insult you without provocation, and make you wish that his generous goodness to you had not closed your lips against retort.

It is not always necessary that a friend should break his leg, for Touchwood to feel compunction and endeavor to make amends for his bearishness or insolence. He becomes spontaneously conscious that he has misbehaved, and he is not only ashamed of himself, but has the better prompting to try and heal any wound he has inflicted. Unhappily the habit of being offensive "without meaning it" leads usually to a way of making amends which the injured person cannot but regard as a being amiable without meaning it. The kindness, the complimentary indications or assurances, are apt to appear in the light of a penance adjusted to the foregoing lapses, and by the very contrast they offer call up a keener memory of the wrong they atone for. They are not a spontaneous prompting of good-will, but an elaborate compensation. And, in fact, Dion's atoning friendliness has a ring of artificiality. Because he formerly disguised his good feeling towards you he now expresses more than he quite feels. It is in vain. Having made you extremely uncomfortable last week he has absolutely diminished his power of making you happy to-day : he struggles against this result by excessive effort, but he has taught you to observe his fitfulness rather than to be warmed by his episodic show of regard.

I suspect that many persons who have an uncertain, incalculable temper flatter themselves that it enhances their fascination ; but perhaps they are under the prior mistake of exaggerating the charm which they suppose to be thus strengthened ; in any case they will do well not to trust in the attractions of caprice and moodiness for a long continuance or for close intercourse. A pretty woman may fan the

flame of distant adorers by harassing them, but if she lets one of them make her his wife, the point of view from which he will look at her poutings and tossings and mysterious inability to be pleased will be seriously altered. And if slavery to a pretty woman, which seems among the least conditional forms of abject service, will not bear too great a strain from her bad temper even though her beauty remain the same, it is clear that a man whose claims lie in his high character or high performances had need impress us very constantly with his peculiar value and indispensableness, if he is to test our patience by an uncertainty of temper which leaves us absolutely without grounds for guessing how he will receive our persons or humbly advanced opinions, or what line he will take on any but the most momentous occasions.

For it is among the repulsive effects of this bad temper, which is supposed to be compatible with shining virtues, that it is apt to determine a man's sudden adhesion to an opinion, whether on a personal or impersonal matter, without leaving him time to consider his grounds. The adhesion is sudden and momentary, but it either forms a precedent for his line of thought and action, or it is presently seen to have been inconsistent with his true mind. This determination of partisanship by temper has its worst effects in the career of the public man, who is always in danger of getting so enthralled by his own words that he looks into facts and questions not to get rectifying knowledge, but to get evidence that will justify his actual attitude which was assumed under an impulse dependent on something else than knowledge. There has been plenty of insistence on the evil of swearing by the words of a master, and having the judgment uniformly controlled by a "He said it;" but a much worse woe to befall a man is to have every judgment controlled by an "I said it"—to make a divinity of his own short-sightedness or passion-led aberration and explain the world in its honor. There is hardly a more pitiable degradation than this for a man of high gifts. Hence I cannot join with those who wish that Touchwood, being young enough to enter on public life, should get elected for Parliament and use his excellent abilities to serve his country in that conspicuous manner. For hitherto, in the less momentous incidents of private life, his capricious temper has only produced the minor evil of inconsistency, and he is even greatly at ease in contradicting himself, provided he can contradict you, and disappoint any smiling expectation you may have shown that the impressions you are uttering are

likely to meet with his sympathy, considering that the day before he himself gave you the example which your mind is following. He is at least free from those fetters of self-justification which are the curse of parliamentary speaking, and what I rather desire for him is that he should produce the great book which he is generally pronounced capable of writing, and put his best self imperturbably on record for the advantage of society; because I should then have steady ground for hearing with his diurnal incalculableness, and could fix my gratitude as by a strong staple to that unvarying monumental service. Unhappily, Touchwood's great powers have been only so far manifested as to be believed in, not demonstrated. Everybody rates them highly, and thinks that whatever he chose to do would be done in a first-rate manner. Is it his love of disappointing complacent expectancy which has gone so far as to keep up this lamentable negation, and made him resolve not to write the comprehensive work which he would have written if nobody had expected it of him?

One can see that if Touchwood were to become a public man and take to frequent speaking on platforms or from his seat in the House, it would hardly be possible for him to maintain much integrity of opinion, or to avoid courses of partisanship which a healthy public sentiment would stamp with discredit. Say that he were endowed with the purest honesty, it would inevitably be dragged captive by this mysterious, Protean bad temper. There would be the fatal public necessity of justifying oratorical Temper which had got on its legs in its bitter mood and made insulting imputations, or of keeping up some decent show of consistency with opinions vented out of Temper's contradictoriness. And words would have to be followed up by acts of adhesion.

Certainly if a bad-tempered man can be admirably virtuous, he must be so under extreme difficulties. I doubt the possibility that a high order of character can coexist with a temper like Touchwood's. For it is of the nature of such temper to interrupt the formation of healthy mental habits, which depend on a growing harmony between perception, conviction, and impulse. There may be good feelings, good deeds—for a human nature may pack endless varieties and blessed inconsistencies in its windings—but it is essential to what is worthy to be called high character, that it may be safely calculated on, and that its qualities shall have taken the form of principles or laws habitually, if not perfectly, obeyed.

If a man frequently passes unjust judgments, takes up



false attitudes, intermits his acts of kindness with rude behavior or cruel words, and falls into the consequent vulgar error of supposing that he can make amends by labored agreeableness, I cannot consider such courses any the less ugly because they are ascribed to "temper." Especially I object to the assumption that his having a fundamentally good disposition is either an apology or a compensation for his bad behavior. If his temper yesterday made him lash the horses, upset the curricule and cause a breakage in my rib, I feel it no compensation that to-day he vows he will drive me anywhere in the gentlest manner any day as long as he lives. Yesterday was what it was, my rib is paining me, it is not a main object of my life to be driven by Touchwood — and I have no confidence in his lifelong gentleness. The utmost form of placability I am capable of is to try and remember his better deeds already performed, and, mindful of my own offences, to bear him no malice. But I cannot accept his amends.

If the bad-tempered man wants to apologize he had need to do it on a large public scale, make some beneficent discovery, produce some stimulating work of genius, invent some powerful process — prove himself such a good to contemporary multitudes and future generations, as to make the discomfort he causes his friends and acquaintances a vanishing quantity, a trifle even in their own estimate.

## VII.

### A POLITICAL MOLECULE.

THE most arrant denier must admit that a man often furthers larger ends than he is conscious of, and that while he is transacting his particular affairs with the narrow pertinacity of a respectable ant, he subserves an economy larger than any purpose of his own. Society is happily not dependent for the growth of fellowship on the small minority already endowed with comprehensive sympathy: any molecule of the body politic working towards his own interest in an orderly way gets his understanding more or less penetrated with the fact that his interest is included in that of a large number. I have watched several political molecules being educated in this way by the nature of things into a faint feeling of fraternity. But at this moment I am thinking of Spike, an elector who voted on the side of Progress though he was not inwardly attached to it under that name. For abstractions are deities having many specific names, local habitations, and forms of activity, and so get a multitude of devout servants who care no more for them under their highest titles than the celebrated person who, putting with forcible brevity a view of human motives now much insisted on, asked what Posterity had done for him that he should care for Posterity? To many minds even among the ancients (thought by some to have been invariably poetical) the goddess of wisdom was doubtless worshipped simply as the patroness of spinning and weaving. Now spinning and weaving from a manufacturing, wholesale point of view, was the chief form under which Spike from early years had unconsciously been a devotee of Progress.

He was a political molecule of the most gentlemanlike appearance, not less than six feet high, and showing the utmost nicety in the care of his person and equipment. His umbrella was especially remarkable for its neatness, though perhaps he swung it unduly in walking. His complexion was fresh, his eyes small, bright, and twinkling. He was seen to

great advantage in a hat and great-coat — garments frequently fatal to the impressiveness of shorter figures; but when he was uncovered in the drawing-room, it was impossible not to observe that his head shelved off too rapidly from the eyebrows towards the crown, and that his length of limb seemed to have used up his mind so as to cause an air of abstraction from conversational topics. He appeared, indeed, to be preoccupied with a sense of his exquisite cleanliness, clapped his hands together and rubbed them frequently, straightened his back, and even opened his mouth and closed it again with a slight snap, apparently for no other purpose than the confirmation to himself of his own powers in that line. These are innocent exercises, but they are not such as give weight to a man's personality. Sometimes Spike's mind, emerging from its preoccupation, burst forth in a remark delivered with smiling zest; as, that he did like to see gravel walks well rolled, or that a lady should always wear the best jewellery, or that a bride was a most interesting object; but finding these ideas received rather coldly, he would relapse into abstraction, draw up his back, wrinkle his brows longitudinally, and seem to regard society, even including gravel walks, jewellery, and brides, as essentially a poor affair. Indeed his habit of mind was desponding, and he took melancholy views as to the possible extent of human pleasure and the value of existence. Especially after he had made his fortune in the cotton manufacture, and had thus attained the chief object of his ambition — the object which had engaged his talent for order and persevering application. For his easy leisure caused him much *ennui*. He was abstemious, and had none of those temptations to sensual excess which fill up a man's time first with indulgence and then with the process of getting well from its effects. He had not, indeed, exhausted the sources of knowledge, but here again his notions of human pleasure were narrowed by his want of appetite; for though he seemed rather surprised at the consideration that Alfred the Great was a Catholic, or that apart from the Ten Commandments any conception of moral conduct had occurred to mankind, he was not stimulated to further inquiries on these remote matters. Yet he aspired to what he regarded as intellectual society, willingly entertained benefited clergymen, and bought the books he heard spoken of, arranging them carefully on the shelves of what he called his library, and occasionally sitting alone in the same room with them. But some minds seem well glazed by nature against the

admission of knowledge, and Spike's was one of them. It was not, however, entirely so with regard to politics. He had a strong opinion about the Reform Bill, and saw clearly that the large trading towns ought to send members. Portraits of the Reform heroes hung framed and glazed in his library: he prided himself on being a Liberal. In this last particular, as well as in not giving benefactions and not making loans without interest, he showed unquestionable firmness. On the Repeal of the Corn Laws, again, he was thoroughly convinced. His mind was expansive towards foreign markets, and his imagination could see that the people from whom he took corn might be able to take the cotton goods which they had hitherto dispensed with. On his conduct in these political concerns, his wife, otherwise influential as a woman who belonged to a family with a title in it, and who had condescended in marrying him, could gain no hold: she had to blush a little at what was called her husband's "radicalism" — an epithet which was a very unfair impeachment of Spike, who never went to the root of anything. But he understood his own trading affairs, and in this way became a genuine, constant political element. If he had been born a little later he could have been accepted as an eligible member of Parliament, and if he had belonged to a high family he might have done for a member of the Government. Perhaps his indifference to "views" would have passed for administrative judiciousness, and he would have been so generally silent that he must often have been silent in the right place. But this is empty speculation: there is no warrant for saying what Spike would have been and known so as to have made a calculable political element, if he had not been educated by having to manage his trade. A small mind trained to useful occupation for the satisfying of private need becomes a representative of genuine class-needs. Spike objected to certain items of legislation because they hampered his own trade, but his neighbors' trade was hampered by the same causes; and though he would have been simply selfish in a question of light or water between himself and a fellow-townsmen, his need for a change in legislation, being shared by all his neighbors in trade, ceased to be simply selfish, and raised him to a sense of common injury and common benefit. True, if the law could have been changed for the benefit of his particular business, leaving the cotton trade in general in a sorry condition while he prospered, Spike might not have thought that result intolerably unjust; but the nature of things did not allow of such a result

being contemplated as possible; it allowed of an enlarged market for Spike only through the enlargement of his neighbors' market, and the Possible is always the ultimate master of our efforts and desires. Spike was obliged to contemplate a general benefit, and thus became public-spirited in spite of himself. Or rather, the nature of things transmuted his active egoism into a demand for a public benefit.

Certainly if Spike had been born a marquis he could not have had the same chance of being useful as a political element. But he might have had the same appearance, have been equally null in conversation, sceptical as to the reality of pleasure, and destitute of historical knowledge; perhaps even dimly disliking Jesuitism as a quality in Catholic minds, or regarding Bacon as the inventor of physical science. The depth of middle-aged gentlemen's ignorance will never be known, for want of public examinations in this branch.

## VIII.

### THE WATCH-DOG OF KNOWLEDGE.

MORDAX is an admirable man, ardent in intellectual work, public-spirited, affectionate, and able to find the right words in conveying ingenious ideas or elevated feeling. Pity that to all these graces he cannot add what would give them the utmost finish — the occasional admission that he has been in the wrong, the occasional frank welcome of a new idea as something not before present to his mind! But no: Mordax's self-respect seems to be of that fiery quality which demands that none but the monarchs of thought shall have an advantage over him, and in the presence of contradiction or the threat of having his notions corrected, he becomes astonishingly unscrupulous and cruel for so kindly and conscientious a man.

"You are fond of attributing those fine qualities to Mordax," said Acer, the other day, "but I have not much belief in virtues that are always requiring to be asserted in spite of appearances against them. True fairness and good-will show themselves precisely where his are conspicuously absent. I mean, in recognizing claims which the rest of the world are not likely to stand up for. It does not need much love of truth and justice in me to say that Aldebaran is a bright star, or Isaac Newton the greatest of discoverers; nor much kindness in me to want my notes to be heard above the rest in a chorus of hallelujahs to one already crowned. It is my way to apply tests. Does the man who has the ear of the public use his advantage tenderly towards poor fellows who may be hindered of their due if he treats their pretensions with scorn? That is my test of his justice and benevolence."

My answer was, that his system of moral tests might be as delusive as what ignorant people take to be tests of intellect and learning. If the scholar or *savant* cannot answer their haphazard questions on the shortest notice, their belief in his capacity is shaken. But the better informed have given up the Johnsonian theory of mind as a pair of legs able to walk

east or west according to choice. Intellect is no longer taken to be a ready-made dose of ability to attain eminence (or mediocrity) in all departments; it is even admitted that application in one line of study or practice has often a laming effect in other directions, and that an intellectual quality or special facility which is a furtherance in one medium of effort is a drag in another. We have convinced ourselves by this time that a man may be a sage in celestial physics and a poor creature in the purchase of seed-corn, or even in theorizing about the affections; that he may be a mere fumbler in physiology and yet show a keen insight into human motives; that he may seem the "poor Poll" of the company in conversation and yet write with some humorous vigor. It is not true that a man's intellectual power is like the strength of a timber beam, to be measured by its weakest point.

Why should we any more apply that fallacious standard of what is called consistency to a man's moral nature, and argue against the existence of fine impulses or habits of feeling in relation to his actions generally, because those better movements are absent in a class of cases which act peculiarly on an irritable form of his egoism? The mistake might be corrected by our taking notice that the ungenerous words or acts which seem to us the most utterly incompatible with good dispositions in the offender, are those which offend ourselves. All other persons are able to draw a milder conclusion. Laniger, who has a temper but no talent for repartee, having been run down in a fierce way by Mordax, is inwardly persuaded that the highly-lauded man is a wolf at heart: he is much tried by perceiving that his own friends seem to think no worse of the reckless assailant than they did before; and Corvus, who has lately been flattered by some kindness from Mordax, is unmindful enough of Laniger's feeling to dwell on this instance of good-nature with admiring gratitude. There is a fable that when the badger had been stung all over by bees, a bear consoled him by a rhapsodic account of how he himself had just breakfasted on their honey. The badger replied, peevishly, "The stings are in my flesh, and the sweetness is on your muzzle." The bear, it is said, was surprised at the badger's want of altruism.

But this difference of sensibility between Laniger and his friends only mirrors in a faint way the difference between his own point of view and that of the man who has injured him. If those neutral, perhaps even affectionate persons, form no lively conception of what Laniger suffers, how should Mordax

have any such sympathetic imagination to check him in what he persuades himself is a scourging administered by the qualified man to the unqualified? Depend upon it, his conscience, though active enough in some relations, has never given him a twinge because of his polemical rudeness and even brutality. He would go from the room where he has been tiring himself through the watches of the night in lifting and turning a sick friend, and straightway write a reply or rejoinder in which he mercilessly pilloried a Laniger who had supposed that he could tell the world something else or more than had been sanctioned by the eminent Mordax—and what was worse, had sometimes really done so. Does this nullify the genuineness of motive which made him tender to his suffering friend? Not at all. It only proves that his arrogant egoism, set on fire, sends up smoke and flame where just before there had been the dews of fellowship and pity. He is angry and equips himself accordingly — with a penknife to give the offender a *comprachico* countenance, a mirror to show him the effect, and a pair of nailed boots to give him his dismissal. All this to teach him who the Romans really were, and to purge inquiry of incompetent intrusion, so rendering an important service to mankind.

When a man is in a rage and wants to hurt another in consequence, he can always regard himself as the civil arm of a spiritual power, and all the more easily because there is real need to assert the righteous efficacy of indignation. I for my part feel with the Lanigers, and should object all the more to their or my being lacerated and dressed with salt, if the administrator of such torture alleged as a motive his care for Truth and posterity, and got himself pictured with a halo in consequence. In transactions between fellow-men it is well to consider a little, in the first place, what is fair and kind towards the person immediately concerned, before we spit and roast him on behalf of the next century but one. Wide-reaching motives, blessed and glorious as they are, and of the highest sacramental virtue, have their dangers, like all else that touches the mixed life of the earth. They are archangels with awful brow and flaming sword, summoning and encouraging us to do the right and the divinely heroic, and we feel a beneficent tremor in their presence; but to learn what it is they thus summon us to do, we have to consider the mortals we are elbowing, who are of our own stature and our own appetites. I cannot feel sure how my voting will affect the condition of Central Asia in the coming ages, but



I have good reason to believe that the future populations there will be none the worse off because I abstain from conjectural vilification of my opponents during the present parliamentary session, and I am very sure that I shall be less injurious to my contemporaries. On the whole, and in the vast majority of instances, the action by which we can do the best for future ages is of the sort which has a certain beneficence and grace for contemporaries. A sour father may reform prisons, but considered in his sourness he does harm. The deed of Judas has been attributed to far-reaching views, and the wish to hasten his Master's declaration of himself as the Messiah. Perhaps—I will not maintain the contrary—Judas represented his motive in this way, and felt justified in his traitorous kiss; but my belief that he deserved, metaphorically speaking, to be where Dante saw him, at the bottom of the Malebolge, would not be the less strong because he was not convinced that his action was detestable. I refuse to accept a man who has the stomach for such treachery, as a hero impatient for the redemption of mankind and for the beginning of a reign when the kisses shall be those of peace and righteousness.

All this is by the way, to show that my apology for Mordax was not founded on his persuasion of superiority in his own motives, but on the compatibility of unfair, equivocal, and even cruel actions with a nature which, apart from special temptations, is kindly and generous; and also to enforce the need of checks from a fellow-feeling with those whom our acts immediately (not distantly) concern. Will any one be so hardy as to maintain that an otherwise worthy man cannot be vain and arrogant? I think most of us have some interest in arguing the contrary. And it is of the nature of vanity and arrogance, if unchecked, to become cruel and self-justifying. There are fierce beasts within: chain them, chain them, and let them learn to cower before the creature with wider reason. This is what one wishes for Mordax—that his heart and brain should restrain the outleap of roar and talons.

As to his unwillingness to admit that an idea which he has not discovered is novel to him, one is surprised that quick intellect and shrewd observation do not early gather reasons for being ashamed of a mental trick which makes one among the comic parts of that various actor Conceited Ignorance.

I have a sort of valet and factotum, an excellent, respectable servant, whose spelling is so unvitiated by non-phonetic superfluities that he writes *night* as *nit*. One day, looking

over his accounts, I said to him jocosely, "You are in the latest fashion with your spelling, Pummel: most people spell 'night' with a *gh* between the *i* and the *t*, but the greatest scholars now spell it as you do."—"So I suppose, sir," says Pummel; "I've see it with a *gh*, but I've noways give into that myself."

You would never catch Pummel in an interjection of surprise. I have sometimes laid traps for his astonishment, but he has escaped them all, either by a respectful neutrality, as of one who would not appear to notice that his master had been taking too much wine, or else by that strong persuasion of his all-knowingness which makes it simply impossible for him to feel himself newly informed. If I tell him that the world is spinning round and along like a top, and that he is spinning with it, he says, "Yes, I've heard a deal of that in my time, sir," and lifts the horizontal lines of his brow a little higher, balancing his head from side to side as if it were too painfully full. Whether I tell him that they cook puppies in China, that there are ducks with fur coats in Australia, or that in some parts of the world it is the pink of politeness to put your tongue out on introduction to a respectable stranger, Pummel replies, "So I suppose, sir," with an air of resignation to hearing my poor version of well-known things, such as elders use in listening to lively boys lately presented with an anecdote book. His utmost concession is, that what you state is what he would have supplied if you had given him *carte blanche* instead of your needless instruction, and in this sense his favorite answer is, "I should say."

"Pummel," I observed, a little irritated at not getting my coffee, "if you were to carry your kettle and spirits of wine up a mountain of a morning, your water would boil there sooner."—"I should say, sir."—"Or, there are boiling springs in Iceland. Better go to Iceland."—"That's what I've been thinking, sir."

I have taken to asking him hard questions, and as I expected, he never admits his own inability to answer them without representing it as common to the human race. "What is the cause of the tides, Pummel?"—"Well, sir, nobody rightly knows. Many gives their opinion, but if I was to give mine, it 'ud be different."

But while he is never surprised himself, he is constantly imagining situations of surprise for others. His own consciousness is that of one so thoroughly soaked in knowledge that further absorption is impossible, but his neighbors appear to

him to be in the state of thirsty sponges which it is a charity to besprinkle. His great interest in thinking of foreigners is that they must be surprised at what they see in England, and especially at the beef. He is often occupied with the surprise Adam must have felt at the sight of the assembled animals — “for he was not like us, sir, used from a b’y to Wombwell’s shows.” He is fond of discoursing to the lad who acts as shoe-black and general subaltern, and I have overheard him saying to that small upstart, with some severity, “Now don’t you pretend to know, because the more you pretend the more I see your ignorance” — a lucidity on his part which has confirmed my impression that the thoroughly self-satisfied person is the only one fully to appreciate the charm of humility in others.

Your diffident self-suspecting mortal is not very angry that others should feel more comfortable about themselves, provided they are not otherwise offensive: he is rather like the chilly person, glad to sit next a warmer neighbor; or the timid, glad to have a courageous fellow-traveller. It cheers him to observe the store of small comforts that his fellow-creatures may find in their self-complacency, just as one is pleased to see poor old souls soothed by the tobacco and snuff for which one has neither nose nor stomach one’s self.

But your arrogant man will not tolerate a presumption which he sees to be ill-founded. The service he regards society as most in need of is to put down the conceit which is so particularly rife around him that he is inclined to believe it the growing characteristic of the present age. In the schools of Magna Græcia, or in the sixth century of our era, or even under Kublai Khan, he finds a comparative freedom from that presumption by which his contemporaries are stirring his able gall. The way people will now flaunt notions which are not his without appearing to mind that they are not his, strikes him as especially disgusting. It might seem surprising to us that one strongly convinced of his own value should prefer to exalt an age in which *he* did not flourish, if it were not for the reflection that the present age is the only one in which anybody has appeared to undervalue him.

## IX.

### A HALF-BREED.

AN early deep-seated love to which we become faithless has its unfailing Nemesis, if only in that division of soul which narrows all newer joys by the intrusion of regret and the established presentiment of change. I refer not merely to the love of a person, but to the love of ideas, practical beliefs, and social habits. And faithlessness here means not a gradual conversion dependent on enlarged knowledge, but a yielding to seductive circumstance; not a conviction that the original choice was a mistake, but a subjection to incidents that flatter a growing desire. In this sort of love it is the forsaker who has the melancholy lot; for an abandoned belief may be more effectively vengeful than Dido. The child of a wandering tribe caught young and trained to polite life, if he feels an hereditary yearning can run away to the old wilds and get his nature into tune. But there is no such recovery possible to the man who remembers what he once believed without being convinced that he was in error, who feels within him unsatisfied stirrings towards old beloved habits and intimacies from which he has far receded without conscious justification or unwavering sense of superior attractiveness in the new. This involuntary renegade has his character hopelessly jangled and out of tune. He is like an organ with its stops in the lawless condition of obtruding themselves without method, so that hearers are amazed by the most unexpected transitions—the trumpet breaking in on the flute, and the oboe confounding both.

Hence the lot of Mixtus affects me pathetically, notwithstanding that he spends his growing wealth with liberality and manifest enjoyment. To most observers he appears to be simply one of the fortunate and also sharp commercial men who began with meaning to be rich and have become what they meant to be: a man never taken to be well-born, but surprisingly better informed than the well-born usually are, and distinguished among ordinary commercial magnates

by a personal kindness which prompts him not only to help the suffering in a material way through his wealth, but also by direct ministration of his own; yet with all this, diffusing, as it were, the odor of a man delightedly conscious of his wealth as an equivalent for the other social distinctions of rank and intellect which he can thus admire without envying. Hardly one among those superficial observers can suspect that he aims or has ever aimed at being a writer; still less can they imagine that his mind is often moved by strong currents of regret and of the most unworldly sympathies from the memories of a youthful time when his chosen associates were men and women whose only distinction was a religious, a philanthropic, or an intellectual enthusiasm, when the lady on whose words his attention most hung was a writer of minor religious literature, when he was a visitor and exhorter of the poor in the alleys of a great provincial town, and when he attended the lectures given specially to young men by Mr. Apollos, the eloquent Congregational preacher, who had studied in Germany and had liberal advanced views then far beyond the ordinary teaching of his sect. At that time Mixtus thought himself a young man of socially reforming ideas, of religious principles and religious yearnings. It was within his prospects also to be rich, but he looked forward to a use of his riches chiefly for reforming and religious purposes. His opinions were of a strongly democratic stamp, except that even then, belonging to the class of employers, he was opposed to all demands in the employed that would restrict the expansiveness of trade. He was the most democratic in relation to the unreasonable privileges of the aristocracy and landed interest; and he had also a religious sense of brotherhood with the poor. Altogether, he was a sincerely benevolent young man, interested in ideas, and renouncing personal ease for the sake of study, religious communion, and good works. If you had known him then you would have expected him to marry a highly serious and perhaps literary woman, sharing his benevolent and religious habits, and likely to encourage his studies — a woman who along with himself would play a distinguished part in one of the most enlightened religious circles of a great provincial capital.

How is it that Mixtus finds himself in a London mansion, and in society totally unlike that which made the ideal of his younger years? And whom *did* he marry?

Why, he married Scintilla, who fascinated him as she had fascinated others, by her prettiness, her liveliness, and her

music. It is a common enough case — that of a man being suddenly captivated by a woman nearly the opposite of his ideal; or if not wholly captivated, at least effectively captured by a combination of circumstances along with an unwarily manifested inclination which might otherwise have been transient. Mixtus was captivated and then captured on the worldly side of his disposition, which had been always growing and flourishing side by side with his philanthropic and religious tastes. He had ability in business, and he had early meant to be rich; also, he was getting rich, and the taste for such success was naturally growing with the pleasure of rewarded exertion. It was during a business sojourn in London that he met Scintilla, who, though without fortune, associated with families of Greek merchants living in a style of splendor, and with artists patronized by such wealthy entertainers. Mixtus on this occasion became familiar with a world in which wealth seemed the key to a more brilliant sort of dominance than that of a religious patron in the provincial circles of X. Would it not be possible to unite the two kinds of sway? A man bent on the most useful ends might, *with a fortune large enough*, make morality magnificent, and recommend religious principle by showing it in combination with the best kind of house and the most liberal of tables; also with a wife whose graces, wit, and accomplishments gave a finish — sometimes lacking even to establishments got up with that unhesitating worldliness to which high cost is a sufficient reason. Enough.

Mixtus married Scintilla. Now this lively lady knew nothing of Nonconformists, except that they were unfashionable: she did not distinguish one conventicle from another, and Mr. Apollos with his enlightened interpretations seemed to her as heavy a bore, if not quite so ridiculous, as Mr. Johns could have been with his solemn twang at the Baptist chapel in the lowest suburbs, or as a local preacher among the Methodists. In general, people who appeared seriously to believe in any sort of doctrine, whether religious, social, or philosophical, seemed rather absurd to Scintilla. Ten to one these theoretic people pronounced oddly, had some reason or other for saying that the most agreeable things were wrong, wore objectionable clothes, and wanted you to subscribe to something. They were probably ignorant of art and music, did not understand *badinage*, and, in fact, could talk of nothing amusing. In Scintilla's eyes the majority of persons were ridiculous and deplorably wanting in that keen perception of what was good taste, with which she herself was blessed by nature and edu-

cation; but the people understood to be religious or otherwise theoretic, were the most ridiculous of all, without being proportionately amusing and invitable.

Did Mixtus not discover this view of Scintilla's before their marriage? Or did he allow her to remain in ignorance of habits and opinions which had made half the occupation of his youth?

When a man is inclined to marry a particular woman, and has made any commitment of himself, this woman's opinions, however different from his own, are readily regarded as part of her pretty ways, especially if they are more negative; as, for example, that she does not insist on the Trinity or on the rightfulness or expediency of church rates, but simply regards her lover's troubling himself in disputation on these heads as stuff and nonsense. The man feels his own superior strength, and is sure that marriage will make no difference to him on the subjects about which he is in earnest. And to laugh at men's affairs is a woman's privilege, tending to enliven the domestic hearth. If Scintilla had no liking for the best sort of nonconformity, she was without any troublesome bias towards Episcopacy, Anglicanism, and early sacraments, and was quite contented not to go to church.

As to Scintilla's acquaintance with her lover's tastes on these subjects, she was equally convinced on her side that a husband's queer ways while he was a bachelor would be easily laughed out of him when he had married an adroit woman. Mixtus, she felt, was an excellent creature, quite likable, who was getting rich; and Scintilla meant to have all the advantages of a rich man's wife. She was not in the least a wicked woman; she was simply a pretty animal of the ape kind, with an aptitude for certain accomplishments which education had made the most of.

But we have seen what has been the result to poor Mixtus. He has become richer even than he dreamed of being, has a little palace in London, and entertains with splendor the half-aristocratic, professional, and artistic society which he is proud to think select. This society regards him as a clever fellow in his particular branch, seeing that he has become a considerable capitalist, and as a man desirable to have on the list of one's acquaintances. But from every other point of view Mixtus finds himself personally submerged: what he happens to think is not felt by his esteemed guests to be of any consequence, and what he used to think with the ardor of conviction he now hardly ever expresses. He is transplanted,

and the sap within him has long been diverted into other than the old lines of vigorous growth. How could he speak to the artist Crespi or to Sir Hong Kong Bantam about the enlarged doctrine of Mr. Apollos? How could he mention to them his former efforts towards evangelizing the inhabitants of the X. alleys? And his references to his historical and geographical studies towards a survey of possible markets for English products are received with an air of ironical suspicion by many of his political friends, who take his pretension to give advice concerning the Amazon, the Euphrates, and the Niger as equivalent to the currier's wide views on the applicability of leather. He can only make a figure through his genial hospitality. It is in vain that he buys the best pictures and statues of the best artists. Nobody will call him a judge in art. If his pictures and statues are well chosen it is generally thought that Scintilla told him what to buy; and yet Scintilla in other connections is spoken of as having only a superficial and often questionable taste. Mixtus, it is decided, is a good fellow, not ignorant — no, really having a good deal of knowledge as well as sense, but not easy to classify otherwise than as a rich man. He has consequently become a little uncertain as to his own point of view, and in his most unreserved moments of friendly intercourse, even when speaking to listeners whom he thinks likely to sympathize with the earlier part of his career, he presents himself in all his various aspects and feels himself in turn what he has been, what he is, and what others take him to be (for this last status is what we must all more or less accept). He will recover with some glow of enthusiasm the vision of his old associates, the particular limit he was once accustomed to trace of freedom in religious speculation, and his old ideal of a worthy life; but he will presently pass to the argument that money is the only means by which you can get what is best worth having in the world, and will arrive at the exclamation "Give me money!" with the tone and gesture of a man who both feels and knows. Then if one of his audience, not having money, remarks that a man may have made up his mind to do without money because he prefers something else, Mixtus is with him immediately, cordially concurring in the supreme value of mind and genius, which indeed make his own chief delight, in that he is able to entertain the admirable possessors of these attributes at his own table, though not himself reckoned among them. Yet, he will proceed to observe, there was a time when he sacrificed his sleep to study, and even now amid the press of



business he from time to time thinks of taking up the manuscripts which he hopes some day to complete, and is always increasing his collection of valuable works bearing on his favorite topics. And it is true that he has read much in certain directions, and can remember what he has read; he knows the history and theories of colonization and the social condition of countries that do not at present consume a sufficiently large share of our products and manufactures. He continues his early habit of regarding the spread of Christianity as a great result of our commercial intercourse with black, brown, and yellow populations; but this is an idea not spoken of in the sort of fashionable society that Scintilla collects round her husband's table, and Mixtus now philosophically reflects that the cause must come before the effect, and that the thing to be directly striven for is the commercial intercourse, not excluding a little war if that also should prove needful as a pioneer of Christianity. He has long been wont to feel bashful about his former religion; as if it were an old attachment having consequences which he did not abandon but kept in decent privacy, his avowed objects and actual position being incompatible with their public acknowledgment.

There is the same kind of fluctuation in his aspect towards social questions and duties. He has not lost the kindness that used to make him a benefactor and succorer of the needy, and he is still liberal in helping forward the clever and industrious; but in his active superintendence of commercial undertakings he has contracted more and more of the bitterness which capitalists and employers often feel to be a reasonable mood towards obstructive proletaries. Hence many who have occasionally met him when trade questions were being discussed, conclude him to be indistinguishable from the ordinary run of moneyed and money-getting men. Indeed, hardly any of his acquaintances know what Mixtus really is, considered as a whole — nor does Mixtus himself know it.

## X.

### DEBASING THE MORAL CURRENCY.

"IL ne faut pas mettre un ridicule où il n'y en a point : c'est se gâter le goût, c'est corrompre son jugement et celui des autres. Mais le ridicule qui est quelque part, il faut l'y voir, l'en tirer avec grâce et d'une manière qui plaise et qui instruisse."

I am fond of quoting this passage from La Bruyère, because the subject is one where I like to show a Frenchman on my side, to save my sentiments from being set down to my peculiar dulness and deficient sense of the ludicrous, and also that they may profit by that enhancement of ideas when presented in a foreign tongue, that glamor of unfamiliarity conferring a dignity on the foreign names of very common things, of which even a philosopher like Dugald Stewart confesses the influence. I remember hearing a fervid woman attempt to recite in English the narrative of a begging Frenchman who described the violent death of his father in the July days. The narrative had impressed her, through the mists of her flushed anxiety to understand it, as something quite grandly pathetic; but finding the facts turn out meagre, and her audience cold, she broke off, saying, "It sounded so much finer in French — *j'ai vu le sang de mon père*, and so on — I wish I could repeat it in French." This was a pardonable illusion in an old-fashioned lady who had not received the polyglot education of the present day; but I observe that even now much nonsense and bad taste win admiring acceptance solely by virtue of the French language, and one may fairly desire that what seems a just discrimination should profit by the fashionable prejudice in favor of La Bruyère's idiom. But I wish he had added that the habit of dragging the ludicrous into topics where the chief interest is of a different or even opposite kind is a sign not of endowment, but of deficiency. The art of spoiling is within reach of the dull-est faculty: the coarsest clown with a hammer in his hand might chip the nose off every statue and bust in the Vatican,

and stand grinning at the effect of his work. Because wit is an exquisite product of high powers, we are not therefore forced to admit the sadly confused inference of the monotonous jester that he is establishing his superiority over every less facetious person, and over every topic on which he is ignorant or insensible, by being uneasy until he has distorted it in the small cracked mirror which he carries about with him as a joking apparatus. Some high authority is needed to give many worthy and timid persons the freedom of muscular repose under the growing demand on them to laugh when they have no other reason than the peril of being taken for dullards; still more to inspire them with the courage to say that they object to the theatrical spoiling for themselves and their children of all affecting themes, all the grander deeds and aims of men, by burlesque associations adapted to the taste of rich fishmongers in the stalls and their assistants in the gallery. The English people in the present generation are falsely reputed to know Shakespeare (as, by some innocent persons, the Florentine mule-drivers are believed to have known the *Divina Commedia*, not, perhaps, excluding all the subtle discourses in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*); but there seems a clear prospect that in the coming generation he will be known to them through burlesques, and that his plays will find a new life as pantomimes. A bottle-nosed Lear will come on with a monstrous corpulence from which he will frantically dance himself free during the midnight storm; Rosalind and Celia will join in a grotesque ballet with shepherds and shepherdesses; Ophelia in fleshings and a voluminous brevity of grenade will dance through the mad scene, finishing with the famous "attitude of the scissors" in the arms of Laertes; and all the speeches in "Hamlet" will be so ingeniously parodied that the originals will be reduced to a mere *memoria technica* of the improver's puns — premonitory signs of a hideous millennium, in which the lion will have to lie down with the lascivious monkeys whom (if we may trust Pliny) his soul naturally abhors.

I have been amazed to find that some artists whose own works have the ideal stamp, are quite insensible to the damaging tendency of the burlesquing spirit which ranges to and fro and up and down on the earth, seeing no reason (except a precarious censorship) why it should not appropriate every sacred, heroic, and pathetic theme which serves to make up the treasure of human admiration, hope, and love. One would have thought that their own half-despairing efforts

to invest in worthy outward shape the vague inward impressions of sublimity, and the consciousness of an implicit ideal in the commonest scenes, might have made them susceptible of some disgust or alarm at a species of burlesque which is likely to render their compositions no better than a dissolving view, where every noble form is seen melting into its preposterous caricature. It used to be imagined of the unhappy mediæval Jews that they parodied Calvary by crucifying dogs: if they had been guilty they would at least have had the excuse of the hatred and rage begotten by persecution. Are we on the way to a parody which shall have no other excuse than the reckless search after fodder for degraded appetites — after the pay to be earned by pasturing Circe's herd where they may defile every monument of that growing life which should have kept them human?

The world seems to me well supplied with what is genuinely ridiculous: wit and humor may play as harmlessly or beneficently round the changing facets of egoism, absurdity, and vice, as the sunshine over the rippling sea or the dewy meadows. Why should we make our delicious sense of the ludicrous, with its invigorating shocks of laughter and its irrepressible smiles which are the outflow of an inward radiation as gentle and cheering as the warmth of morning, flourish like a brigand on the robbery of our mental wealth? — or let it take its exercise as a madman might, if allowed a free nightly promenade, by drawing the populace with bonfires which leave some venerable structure a blackened ruin or send a scorching smoke across the portraits of the past, at which we once looked with a loving recognition of fellowship, and disfigure them into butts of mockery? — nay, worse — use it to degrade the healthy appetites and affections of our nature as they are seen to be degraded in insane patients whose system, all out of joint, finds matter for screaming laughter in mere topsy-turvy, makes every passion preposterous or obscene, and turns the hard-won order of life into a second chaos hideous enough to make one wail that the first was ever thrilled with light?

This is what I call debasing the moral currency: lowering the value of every inspiring fact and tradition so that it will command less and less of the spiritual products, the generous motives which sustain the charm and elevation of our social existence — the something besides bread by which man saves his soul alive. The bread-winner of the family may demand more and more coppery shillings, or assignats, or greenbacks

for his day's work, and so get the needful quantum of food; but let that moral currency be emptied of its value—let a greedy buffoonery debase all historic beauty, majesty, and pathos, and the more you heap up the desecrated symbols the greater will be the lack of the ennobling emotions which subdue the tyranny of suffering, and make ambitious one with social virtue.

And yet, it seems, parents will put into the hands of their children ridiculous parodies (perhaps with more ridiculous "illustrations") of the poems which stirred their own tenderness or filial piety, and carry them to make their first acquaintance with great men, great works, or solemn crises through the medium of some miscellaneous burlesque which, with its idiotic puns and farcical attitudes, will remain among their primary associations, and reduce them throughout their time of studious preparation for life to the moral imbecility of an inward giggle at what might have stimulated their high emulation or fed the fountains of compassion, trust, and constancy. One wonders where these parents have deposited that stock of morally educating stimuli which is to be independent of poetic tradition, and to subsist in spite of the finest images being degraded and the finest words of genius being poisoned as with some befooling drug.

Will fine wit, will exquisite humor prosper the more through this turning of all things indiscriminately into food for a gluttonous laughter, an idle craving without sense of flavors? On the contrary. That delightful power which La Bruyère points to—*le ridicule qui est quelque part, il faut l'y voir, l'en tirer avec grâce et d'une manière qui plaise et qui instruisse*—depends on a discrimination only compatible with the varied sensibilities which give sympathetic insight, and with the justice of perception which is another name for grave knowledge. Such a result is no more to be expected from faculties on the strain to find some small hook by which they may attach the lowest incongruity to the most momentous subject, than it is to be expected of a sharper, watching for gulls in a great political assemblage, that he will notice the blundering logic of partisan speakers, or season his observation with the salt of historical parallels. But after all our psychological teaching, and in the midst of our zeal for education, we are still, most of us, at the stage of believing that mental powers and habits have somehow, not perhaps in the general statement, but in any particular case, a kind of spiritual glaze against conditions which we are continually applying

to them. We soak our children in habits of contempt and exultant gibing, and yet are confident that—as Clarissa one day said to me—“We can always teach them to be reverent in the right place, you know.” And doubtless if she were to take her boys to see a burlesque Socrates, with swollen legs, dying in the utterance of cockney puns, and were to hang up a sketch of this comic scene among their bedroom prints, she would think this preparation not at all to the prejudice of their emotions on hearing their tutor read that narrative of the *Apology* which has been consecrated by the reverent gratitude of ages. This is the impoverishment that threatens our posterity:—a new Famine, a meagre fiend with lewd grin and clumsy hoof, is breathing a moral mildew over the harvest of our human sentiments. These are the most delicate elements of our too easily perishable civilization. And here again I like to quote a French testimony. Sainte Beuve, referring to a time of insurrectionary disturbance, says: “Rien de plus prompt à baisser que la civilisation dans des crises comme celle-ci; on perd en trois semaines le résultat de plusieurs siècles. La civilisation, la *vie* est une chose apprise et inventée qu'on le sache bien: ‘*Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.*’ Les hommes après quelques années de paix oublient trop cette vérité. Ils arrivent à croire que la *culture* est chose innée, qu’elle est la même chose que la *nature*. La sauvagerie est toujours là à deux pas, et, dès qu’on lâche pied, elle recommence.” We have been severely enough taught (if we were willing to learn) that our civilization, considered as a splendid material fabric, is helplessly in peril without the spiritual police of sentiments or ideal feelings. And it is this invisible police which we had need, as a community, strive to maintain in efficient force. How if a dangerous “Swing” were sometimes disguised in a versatile entertainer devoted to the amusement of mixed audiences? And I confess that sometimes when I see a certain style of young lady, who checks our tender admiration with ronge and henna and all the blazonry of an extravagant expenditure, with slang and bold *brusquerie* intended to signify her emancipated view of things, and with cynical mockery which she mistakes for penetration, I am sorely tempted to hiss out “*Pétroleuse!*” It is a small matter to have our palaces set aflame compared with the misery of having our sense of a noble womanhood, which is the inspiration of a purifying shame, the promise of life-penetrating affection, stained and blotted out by images of repulsiveness. These things come—not of higher educa-

tion, but — of dull ignorance fostered into pertness by the greedy vulgarity which reverses Peter's visionary lesson and learns to call all things common and unclean. It comes of debasing the moral currency.

The Tirynthians, according to an ancient story reported by Athenæus, becoming conscious that their trick of laughter at everything and nothing was making them unfit for the conduct of serious affairs, appealed to the Delphic oracle for some means of cure. The god prescribed a peculiar form of sacrifice, which would be effective if they could carry it through without laughing. They did their best; but the flimsy joke of a boy upset their unaccustomed gravity, and in this way the oracle taught them that even the gods could not prescribe a quick cure for a long vitiation, or give power and dignity to a people who in a crisis of the public well-being were at the mercy of a poor jest.

## XI.

### THE WASP CREDITED WITH THE HONEYCOMB.

No man, I imagine, would object more strongly than Euphron to communistic principles in relation to material property, but with regard to property in ideas he entertains such principles willingly, and is disposed to treat the distinction between Mine and Thine in original authorship as egoistic, narrowing, and low. I have known him, indeed, insist at some expense of erudition on the prior right of an ancient, a mediæval, or an eighteenth century writer to be credited with a view or statement lately advanced with some show of originality; and this championship seems to imply a nicety of conscience towards the dead. He is evidently unwilling that his neighbors should get more credit than is due to them, and in this way he appears to recognize a certain proprietorship even in spiritual production. But perhaps it is no real inconsistency that, with regard to many instances of modern origination, it is his habit to talk with a Gallic largeness and refer to the universe: he expatiates on the diffusive nature of intellectual products, free and all-embracing as the liberal air; on the infinitesimal smallness of individual origination compared with the massive inheritance of thought on which every new generation enters; on that growing preparation for every epoch through which certain ideas or modes of view are said to be in the air, and, still more metaphorically speaking, to be inevitably absorbed, so that every one may be excused for not knowing how he got them. Above all, he insists on the proper subordination of the irritable self, the mere vehicle of an idea or combination which, being produced by the sum total of the human race, must belong to that multiple entity, from the accomplished lecturer or popularizer who transmits it, to the remotest generation of Fuegians or Hottentots, however indifferent these may be to the superiority of their right above that of the eminently perishable dyspeptic author.

One may admit that such considerations carry a profound truth to be even religiously contemplated, and yet object all



the more to the mode in which Euphoriion seems to apply them. I protest against the use of these majestic conceptions to do the dirty work of unscrupulosity and justify the non-payment of conscious debts which cannot be defined or enforced by the law. Especially since it is observable that the large views as to intellectual property which can apparently reconcile an able person to the use of lately borrowed ideas as if they were his own, when this spoliation is favored by the public darkness, never hinder him from joining in the zealous tribute of recognition and applause to those warriors of Truth whose triumphal arches are seen in the public ways, those conquerors whose battles and "annexations" even the carpenters and bricklayers know by name. Surely the acknowledgment of a mental debt which will not be immediately detected, and may never be asserted, is a case to which the traditional unsceptibility to "debts of honor" would be suitably transferred. There is no massive public opinion that can be expected to tell on these relations of thinkers and investigators—relations to be thoroughly understood and felt only by those who are interested in the life of ideas and acquainted with their history. To lay false claim to an invention or discovery which has an immediate market value; to vamp up a professedly new book of reference by stealing from the pages of one already produced at the cost of much labor and material; to copy somebody else's poem and send the manuscript to a magazine, or hand it about among friends as an original "effusion;" to deliver an elegant extract from a known writer as a piece of improvised eloquence:—these are the limits within which the dishonest pretence of originality is likely to get hissed or hooted and bring more or less shame on the culprit. It is not necessary to understand the merit of a performance, or even to spell with any comfortable confidence, in order to perceive at once that such pretences are not respectable. But the difference between these vulgar frauds, these devices of ridiculous jays whose ill-secured plumes are seen falling off them as they run, and the quiet appropriation of other people's philosophic or scientific ideas, can hardly be held to lie in their moral quality unless we take impunity as our criterion. The pitiable jays had no presumption in their favor and foolishly fronted an alert incredulity; but Euphoriion, the accomplished theorist, has an audience who expect much of him, and take it as the most natural thing in the world that every unusual view which he presents anonymously should be due solely to his ingenuity. His borrowings are no

incongruous feathers awkwardly stuck on; they have an appropriateness which makes them seem an answer to anticipation, like the return phrases of a melody. Certainly one cannot help the ignorant conclusions of polite society, and there are perhaps fashionable persons who, if a speaker has occasion to explain what the occiput is, will consider that he has lately discovered that curiously named portion of the animal frame: one cannot give a genealogical introduction to every long-stored item of fact or conjecture that may happen to be a revelation for the large class of persons who are understood to judge soundly on a small basis of knowledge. But Euphorion would be very sorry to have it supposed that he is unacquainted with the history of ideas, and sometimes carries even into minutiae the evidence of his exact registration of names in connection with quotable phrases or suggestions: I can therefore only explain the apparent infirmity of his memory in cases of larger "conveyance" by supposing that he is accustomed by the very association of largeness to range them at once under those grand laws of the universe in the light of which Mine and Thine disappear and are resolved into Everybody's or Nobody's, and one man's particular obligations to another melt untraceably into the obligations of the earth to the solar system in general.

Euphorion himself, if a particular omission of acknowledgment were brought home to him, would probably take a narrower ground of explanation. It was a lapse of memory; or it did not occur to him as necessary in this case to mention a name, the source being well known — or (since this seems usually to act as a strong reason for mention) he rather abstained from adducing the name because it might injure the excellent matter advanced, just as an obscure trade-mark casts discredit on a good commodity, and even on the retailer who has furnished himself from a quarter not likely to be esteemed first-rate. No doubt this last is a genuine and frequent reason for the non-acknowledgment of indebtedness to what one may call impersonal as well as personal sources: even an American editor of school classics, whose own English could not pass for more than a syntactical shoddy of the cheapest sort, felt it unfavorable to his reputation for sound learning that he should be obliged to the Penny Cyclopædia, and disguised his references to it under contractions in which *Us. Knowl.* took the place of the low word *Penny*. Works of this convenient stamp, easily obtained and well nourished with matter, are felt to be like rich but unfashionable relations who are visited

and received in privacy, and whose capital is used or inherited without any ostentatious insistence on their names and places of abode. As to memory, it is known that this frail faculty naturally lets drop the facts which are less flattering to our self-love — when it does not retain them carefully as subjects not to be approached, marshy spots with a warning flag over them. But it is always interesting to bring forward eminent names, such as Patricius or Scaliger, Euler or Lagrange, Bopp or Humboldt. To know exactly what has been drawn from them is erudition and heightens our own influence, which seems advantageous to mankind; whereas to cite an author whose ideas may pass as higher currency under our own signature can have no object except the contradictory one of throwing the illumination over his figure when it is important to be seen oneself. All these reasons must weigh considerably with those speculative persons who have to ask themselves whether or not Universal Utilitarianism requires that in the particular instance before them they should injure a man who has been of service to them, and rob a fellow-workman of the credit which is due to him.

After all, however, it must be admitted that hardly any accusation is more difficult to prove, and more liable to be false, than that of a plagiarism which is the conscious theft of ideas and deliberate reproduction of them as original. The arguments on the side of acquittal are obvious and strong: — the inevitable coincidences of contemporary thinking; and our continual experience of finding notions turning up in our minds without any label on them to tell us whence they came, so that if we are in the habit of expecting much from our own capacity we accept them at once as a new inspiration. Then, in relation to the elder authors, there is the difficulty first of learning and then of remembering exactly what has been wrought into the backward tapestry of the world's history, together with the fact that ideas acquired long ago reappear as the sequence of an awakened interest or a line of inquiry which is really new in us, whence it is conceivable that if we were ancients some of us might be offering grateful hecatombs by mistake, and proving our honesty in a ruinously expensive manner. On the other hand, the evidence on which plagiarism is concluded is often of a kind which, though much trusted in questions of erudition and historical criticism, is apt to lead us injuriously astray in our daily judgments, especially of the resentful, condemnatory sort. How Pythagoras came by his ideas, whether St. Paul was acquainted with all

the Greek poets, what Tacitus must have known by hearsay and systematically ignored, are points on which a false persuasion of knowledge is less damaging to justice and charity than an erroneous confidence, supported by reasoning fundamentally similar, of my neighbor's blameworthy behavior in a case where I am personally concerned. No premises require closer scrutiny than those which lead to the constantly echoed conclusion, "He must have known," or "He must have read." I marvel that this facility of belief on the side of knowledge can subsist under the daily demonstration that the easiest of all things to the human mind is *not* to know and *not* to read. To praise, to blame, to shout, grin, or hiss, where others shout, grin, or hiss — these are native tendencies; but to know and to read are artificial, hard accomplishments, concerning which the only safe supposition is, that as little of them has been done as the case admits. An author, keenly conscious of having written, can hardly help imagining his condition of lively interest to be shared by others, just as we are all apt to suppose that the chill or heat we are conscious of must be general, or even to think that our sons and daughters, our pet schemes, and our quarrelling correspondence, are themes to which intelligent persons will listen long without weariness. But if the ardent author happen to be alive to practical teaching he will soon learn to divide the larger part of the enlightened public into those who have not read him and think it necessary to tell him so when they meet him in polite society, and those who have equally abstained from reading him, but wish to conceal this negation and speak of his "incomparable works" with that trust in testimony which always has its cheering side.

Hence it is worse than foolish to entertain silent suspicions of plagiarism, still more to give them voice, when they are founded on a construction of probabilities which a little more attention to every-day occurrences as a guide in reasoning would show us to be really worthless, considered as proof. The length to which one man's memory can go in letting drop associations that are vital to another can hardly find a limit. It is not to be supposed that a person desirous to make an agreeable impression on you would deliberately choose to insist to you, with some rhetorical sharpness, on an argument which you were the first to elaborate in public; yet any one who listens may overhear such instances of obliviousness. You naturally remember your peculiar connection with your acquaintance's judicious views; but why should *he*? Your

fatherhood, which is an intense feeling to you, is only an additional fact of meagre interest for him to remember; and a sense of obligation to the particular living fellow-struggler who has helped us in our thinking, is not yet a form of memory the want of which is felt to be disgraceful or derogatory, unless it is taken to be a want of polite instruction, or causes the missing of a cockade on a day of celebration. In our suspicions of plagiarism, we must recognize as the first weighty probability, that what we who feel injured remember best is precisely what is least likely to enter lastingly into the memory of our neighbors. But it is fair to maintain that the neighbor who borrows your property, loses it for a while, and when it turns up again forgets your connection with it and counts it his own, shows himself so much the feebler in grasp and rectitude of mind. Some absent persons cannot remember the state of wear in their own hats and umbrellas, and have no mental check to tell them that they have carried home a fellow-visitor's more recent purchase: they may be excellent householders, far removed from the suspicion of low devices, but one wishes them a more correct perception, and a more wary sense that a neighbor's umbrella may be newer than their own.

True, some persons are so constituted that the very excellence of an idea seems to them a convincing reason that it must be, if not solely, yet especially theirs. It fits in so beautifully with their general wisdom, it lies implicitly in so many of their manifested opinions, that if they have not yet expressed it (because of preoccupation) it is clearly a part of their indigenous produce, and is proved by their immediate eloquent promulgation of it to belong more naturally and appropriately to them than to the person who seemed first to have alighted on it, and who sinks in their all-originating consciousness to that low kind of entity, a second cause. This is not linnacy, nor pretence, but a genuine state of mind very effective in practice and often carrying the public with it, so that the poor Columbus is found to be a very faulty adventurer and the continent is named after Amerigo. Lighter examples of this instinctive appropriation are constantly met with among brilliant talkers. *Aquila* is too agreeable and amusing for any one who is not himself bent on display to be angry at his conversational rapine — his habit of darting down on every morsel of booty that other birds may hold in their beaks, with an innocent air as if it were all intended for his use and honestly counted on by him as a tribute in kind. Hardly any

man, I imagine, can have had less trouble in gathering a showy stock of information than Aquila. On close inquiry you would probably find that he had not read one epoch-making book of modern times, for he has a career which obliges him to much correspondence and other official work, and he is too fond of being in company to spend his leisure moments in study; but to his quick eye, ear, and tongue, a few predatory excursions in conversation where there are instructed persons gradually furnish surprisingly clever modes of statement and allusion on the dominant topic. When he first adopts a subject he necessarily falls into mistakes, and it is interesting to watch his progress into fuller information and better nourished irony, without his ever needing to admit that he has made a blunder or to appear conscious of correction. Suppose, for example, he had incautiously founded some ingenious remarks on a hasty reckoning that nine thirteens made a hundred and two, and the insignificant Bantam, hitherto silent, seemed to spoil the flow of ideas by stating that the product could not be taken as less than a hundred and seventeen, Aquila would glide on in the most graceful manner from a repetition of his previous remark to the continuation — "All this is on the supposition that a hundred and two were all that could be got out of nine thirteens; but as all the world knows that nine thirteens will yield," etc. — proceeding straightway into a new train of ingenious consequences, and causing Bantam to be regarded by all present as one of those slow persons who take irony for ignorance, and who would warn the weasel to keep awake. How should a small-eyed, feebly crowing mortal like him be quicker in arithmetic than the keen-faced forcible Aquila, in whom universal knowledge is easily credible? Looked into closely, the conclusion from a man's profile, voice, and fluency to his certainty in multiplication beyond the twelves, seems to show a confused notion of the way in which very common things are connected; but it is on such false correlations that men found half their inferences about each other, and high places of trust may sometimes be held on no better foundation.

It is a commonplace that words, writings, measures, and performances in general, have qualities assigned them not by a direct judgment on the performances themselves, but by a presumption of what they are likely to be, considering who is the performer. We all notice in our neighbors this reference to names as guides in criticism, and all furnish illustrations of it in our own practice; ~~for~~ check ourselves as we

will, the first impression from any sort of work must depend on a previous attitude of mind, and this will constantly be determined by the influences of a name. But that our prior confidence or want of confidence in given names is made up of judgments just as hollow as the consequent praise or blame they are taken to warrant, is less commonly perceived, though there is a conspicuous indication of it in the surprise or disappointment often manifested in the disclosure of an authorship about which everybody has been making wrong guesses. No doubt if it had been discovered who wrote the "*Vestiges*," many an ingenuous structure of probabilities would have been spoiled, and some disgust might have been felt for a real author who made comparatively so shabby an appearance of likelihood. It is this foolish trust in prepossessions, founded on spurious evidence, which makes a medium of encouragement for those who, happening to have the ear of the public, give other people's ideas the advantage of appearing under their own well-received name, while any remonstrance from the real producer becomes an unwelcome disturbance of complacency with each person who has paid complimentary tributes in the wrong place.

Hardly any kind of false reasoning is more ludicrous than this on the probabilities of origination. It would be amusing to catechise the guessers as to their exact reasons for thinking their guess "likely:" why Hoopoe of John's has fixed on Toucan of Magdalen; why Shrike attributes its peculiar style to Buzzard, who has not hitherto been known as a writer; why the fair Columba thinks it must belong to the reverend Merula; and why they are all alike disturbed in their previous judgment of its value by finding that it really came from Skunk, whom they had either not thought of at all, or thought of as belonging to a species excluded by the nature of the case. Clearly they were all wrong in their notion of the specific conditions, which lay unexpectedly in the small Skunk, and in him alone — in spite of his education nobody knows where, in spite of somebody's knowing his uncles and cousins, and in spite of nobody's knowing that he was cleverer than they thought him.

Such guesses remind one of a fabulist's imaginary council of animals assembled to consider what sort of creature had constructed a honeycomb found and much tasted by Bruin and other epicures. The speakers all started from the probability that the maker was a bird, because this was the quarter from which a wondrous nest might be expected; for the

animals at that time, knowing little of their own history, would have rejected as inconceivable the notion that a nest could be made by a fish; and as to the insects, they were not willingly received in society and their ways were little known. Several complimentary presumptions were expressed that the honeycomb was due to one or the other admired and popular bird, and there was much fluttering on the part of the Nightingale and Swallow, neither of whom gave a positive denial, their confusion perhaps extending to their sense of identity; but the Owl hissed at this folly, arguing from his particular knowledge that the animal which produced honey must be the Musk-rat, the wondrous nature of whose secretions required no proof; and, in the powerful logical procedure of the Owl, from musk to honey was but a step. Some disturbance arose hereupon, for the Musk-rat began to make himself obtrusive, believing in the Owl's opinion of his powers, and feeling that he could have produced the honey if he had thought of it; until an experimental Butcher-bird proposed to anatomize him as a help to decision. The hubbub increased, the opponents of the Musk-rat inquiring who his ancestors were; until a diversion was created by an able discourse of the Macaw on structures generally, which he classified so as to include the honeycomb, entering into so much admirable exposition that there was a prevalent sense of the honeycomb having probably been produced by one who understood it so well. But Bruin, who had probably eaten too much to listen with edification, grumbled in his low kind of language, that "Fine words butter no parsnips," by which he meant to say that there was no new honey forthcoming.

Perhaps the audience generally was beginning to tire, when the Fox entered with his snout dreadfully swollen, and reported that the beneficent originator in question was the Wasp, which he had found much smeared with undoubted honey, having applied his nose to it—whence indeed the able insect, perhaps justifiably irritated at what might seem a sign of scepticism, had stung him with some severity, an infliction Reynard could hardly regret, since the swelling of a snout normally so delicate would corroborate his statement and satisfy the assembly that he had really found the honey-creating genius.

The Fox's admitted acuteness, combined with the visible swelling, were taken as undeniable evidence, and the revelation undoubtedly met a general desire for information on a point of interest. Nevertheless, there was a murmur the



reverse of delighted, and the feelings of some eminent animals were too strong for them: the Orang-outang's jaw dropped so as seriously to impair the vigor of his expression, the edifying Pelican screamed and flapped her wings, the Owl hissed again, the Macaw became loudly incoherent, and the Gibbon gave his hysterical laugh; while the Hyena, after indulging in a more splenetic guffaw, agitated the question whether it would not be better to hush up the whole affair, instead of giving public recognition to an insect whose produce, it was now plain, had been much over-estimated. But this narrow-spirited motion was negatived by the sweet-toothed majority. A complimentary deputation to the Wasp was resolved on, and there was a confident hope that this diplomatic measure would tell on the production of honey.

## XII.

### "SO YOUNG!"

GANYMEDE was once a girlishly handsome, precocious youth. That one cannot for any considerable number of years go on being youthful, girlishly handsome, and precocious, seems on consideration to be a statement as worthy of credit as the famous syllogistic conclusion, "Socrates was mortal." But many circumstances have conspired to keep up in Ganymede the illusion that he is surprisingly young. He was the last born of his family, and from his earliest memory was accustomed to be commended as such to the care of his elder brothers and sisters: he heard his mother speak of him as her youngest darling with a loving pathos in her tone, which naturally suffused his own views of himself, and gave him the habitual consciousness of being at once very young and very interesting. Then, the disclosure of his tender years was a constant matter of astonishment to strangers who had had proof of his precocious talents, and the astonishment extended to what is called the world at large when he produced "A Comparative Estimate of European Nations" before he was well out of his teens. All comers, on a first interview, told him that he was marvellously young, and some repeated the statement each time they saw him; all critics who wrote about him called attention to the same ground for wonder: his deficiencies and excesses were alike to be accounted for by the flattering fact of his youth, and his youth was the golden background which set off his many-hued endowments. Here was already enough to establish a strong association between his sense of identity and his sense of being unusually young. But after this he devised and founded an ingenious organization for consolidating the literary interests of all the four continents (subsequently including Australasia and Polynesia), he himself presiding in the central office, which thus became a new theatre for the constantly repeated situation of an astonished stranger in the presence of a boldly scheming administrator found to be remarkably young. If we imagine with due charity

the effect on Ganymede, we shall think it greatly to his credit that he continued to feel the necessity of being something more than young, and did not sink by rapid degrees into a parallel of that melancholy object, a superannuated youthful phenomenon. Happily he had enough of valid, active faculty to save him from that tragic fate. He had not exhausted his fountain of eloquent opinion in his "Comparative Estimate," so as to feel himself like some other juvenile celebrities, the sad survivor of his own manifest destiny, or like one who has risen too early in the morning, and finds all the solid day turned into a fatigued afternoon. He has continued to be productive both of schemes and writings, being perhaps helped by the fact that his "Comparative Estimate" did not greatly affect the currents of European thought, and left him with the stimulating hope that he had not done his best, but might yet produce what would make his youth more surprising than ever.

I saw something of him through his Antinous period, the time of rich chestnut locks, parted not by a visible white line, but by a shadowed furrow from which they fell in massive ripples to right and left. In these slim days he looked the younger for being rather below the middle size, and though at last one perceived him contracting an indefinable air of self-consciousness, a slight exaggeration of the facial movements, the attitudes, the little tricks, and the romance in shirt-collars, which must be expected from one who, in spite of his knowledge, was so exceedingly young, it was impossible to say that he was making any great mistake about himself. He was only undergoing one form of a common moral disease: being strongly mirrored for himself in the remark of others, he was getting to see his real characteristics as a dramatic part, a type to which his doings were always in correspondence. Owing to my absence on travel and to other causes I had lost sight of him for several years, but such a separation between two who have not missed each other seems in this busy century only a pleasant reason, when they happen to meet again in some old accustomed haunt, for the one who has stayed at home to be more communicative about himself than he can well be to those who have all along been in his neighborhood. He had married in the interval, and as if to keep up his surprising youthfulness in all relations, he had taken a wife considerably older than himself. It would probably have seemed to him a disturbing inversion of the natural order that any one very near to him should have been younger than he, except

his own children who, however young, would not necessarily hinder the normal surprise at the youthfulness of their father. And if my glance had revealed my impression on first seeing him again, he might have received a rather disagreeable shock, which was far from my intention. My mind, having retained a very exact image of his former appearance, took note of unmistakable changes such as a painter would certainly not have made by way of flattering his subject. He had lost his slenderness, and that curved solidity which might have adorned a taller man was a rather sarcastic threat to his short figure. The English branch of the Teutonic race does not produce many fat youths, and I have even heard an American lady say that she was much "disappointed" at the moderate number and size of our fat men, considering their reputation in the United States; hence a stranger would now have been apt to remark that Ganymede was unusually plump for a distinguished writer, rather than unusually young. But how was he to know this? Many long-standing prepossessions are as hard to be corrected as a long-standing mispronunciation, against which the direct experience of eye and ear is often powerless. And I could perceive that Ganymede's inwrought sense of his surprising youthfulness had been stronger than the superficial reckoning of his years and the merely optical phenomena of the looking-glass. He now held a post under Government, and not only saw, like most subordinate functionaries, how ill everything was managed, but also what were the changes that a high constructive ability would dictate; and in mentioning to me his own speeches and other efforts towards propagating reformatory views in his department, he concluded by changing his tone to a sentimental head voice and saying —

"But I am so young; people object to any prominence on my part; I can only get myself heard anonymously, and when some attention has been drawn the name is sure to creep out. The writer is known to be young, and things are none the forwarder."

"Well," said I, "youth seems the only drawback that is sure to diminish. You and I have seven years less of it than when we last met."

"Ah?" returned Ganymede, as lightly as possible, at the same time casting an observant glance over me, as if he were marking the effect of seven years on a person who had probably begun life with an old look, and even as an infant had given his countenance to that significant doctrine, the transmigration of ancient souls into modern bodies.

I left him on that occasion without any melancholy forecast that his illusion would be suddenly or painfully broken up. I saw that he was well victualled and defended against a ten years' siege from ruthless facts ; and in the course of time observation convinced me that his resistance received considerable aid from without. Each of his written productions, as it came out, was still commented on as the work of a very young man. One critic, finding that he wanted solidity, charitably referred to his youth as an excuse. Another, dazzled by his brilliancy, seemed to regard his youth as so wondrous that all other authors appeared decrepit by comparison, and their style such as might be looked for from gentlemen of the old school. Able pens (according to a familiar metaphor) appeared to shake their heads good-humoredly, implying that Ganymede's crudities were pardonable in one so exceedingly young. Such unanimity amid diversity, which a distant posterity might take for evidence that on the point of age at least there could have been no mistake, was not really more difficult to account for than the prevalence of cotton in our fabrics. Ganymede had been first introduced into the writing world as remarkably young, and it was no exceptional consequence that the first deposit of information about him held its ground against facts which, however open to observation, were not necessarily thought of. It is not so easy, with our rates and taxes and need for economy in all directions, to cast away an epithet or remark that turns up cheaply, and to go in expensive search after more genuine substitutes. There is high Homeric precedent for keeping fast hold of an epithet under all changes of circumstance, and so the precocious author of the "Comparative Estimate" heard the echoes repeating "Young Ganymede" when an illiterate beholder at a railway station would have given him forty years at least. Besides, important elders, sachems of the clubs and public meetings, had a genuine opinion of him as young enough to be checked for speech on subjects which they had spoken mistakenly about when he was in his cradle ; and then, the midway parting of his crisp hair, not common among English committee-men, formed a presumption against the ripeness of his judgment which nothing but a speedy baldness could have removed.

It is but fair to mention all these outward confirmations of Ganymede's illusion, which shows no signs of leaving him. It is true that he no longer hears expressions of surprise at his youthfulness, on a first introduction to an admiring reader ;

but this sort of external evidence has become an unnecessary crutch to his habitual inward persuasion. His manners, his costume, his suppositions of the impression he makes on others, have all their former correspondence with the dramatic part of the young genius. As to the incongruity of his contour and other little accidents of *physique*, he is probably no more aware that they will affect others as incongruities than Armida is conscious how much her rouge provokes our notice of her wrinkles, and causes us to mention sarcastically that motherly age which we should otherwise regard with affectionate reverence.

But let us be just enough to admit that there may be old-young coxcombs as well as old-young coquettes.

### XIII.

#### HOW WE COME TO GIVE OURSELVES FALSE TESTIMONIALS, AND BELIEVE IN THEM.

It is my way when I observe any instance of folly, any queer habit, any absurd illusion, straightway to look for something of the same type in myself, feeling sure that amid all differences there will be a certain correspondence; just as there is more or less correspondence in the natural history even of continents widely apart, and of islands in opposite zones. No doubt men's minds differ in what we may call their climate or share of solar energy, and a feeling or tendency which is comparable to a panther in one may have no more imposing aspect than that of a weasel in another: some are like a tropical habitat in which the very ferns cast a mighty shadow, and the grasses are a dry ocean in which a hunter may be submerged: others like the chilly latitudes in which your forest-tree, fit elsewhere to prop a mine, is a pretty miniature suitable for fancy potting. The eccentric man might be typified by the Australian fauna, refuting half our judicious assumptions of what nature allows. Still, whether fate commanded us to thatch our persons among the Eskimos or to choose the latest thing in tattooing among the Polynesian isles, our precious guide Comparison would teach us in the first place by likeness, and our clew to further knowledge would be resemblance to what we already know. Hence, having a keen interest in the natural history of my inward self, I pursue this plan I have mentioned of using my observation as a clew or lantern by which I detect small herbage or lurking life; or I take my neighbor in his least becoming tricks or efforts as an opportunity for luminous deduction concerning the figure the human genus makes in the specimen which I myself furnish.

Introspection which starts with the purpose of finding out one's own absurdities is not likely to be very mischievous, yet of course it is not free from dangers any more than breathing is, or the other functions that keep us alive and active.

To judge of others by one's self is in its most innocent meaning the briefest expression for our only method of knowing mankind; yet, we perceive, it has come to mean in many cases either the vulgar mistake which reduces every man's value to the very low figure at which the valuer himself happens to stand; or else, the amiable illusion of the higher nature misled by a too generous construction of the lower. One cannot give a recipe for wise judgment: it resembles appropriate muscular action, which is attained by the myriad lessons in nicety of balance and of aim that only practice can give. The danger of the inverse procedure, judging of self by what one observes in others, if it is carried on with much impartiality and keenness of discernment, is that it has a laming effect, enfeebling the energies of indignation and scorn, which are the proper scourges of wrong-doing and meanness, and which should continually feed the wholesome restraining power of public opinion. I respect the horsewhip when applied to the back of Cruelty, and think that he who applies it is a more perfect human being because his outleap of indignation is not checked by a too curious reflection on the nature of guilt — a more perfect human being because he more completely incorporates the best social life of the race, which can never be constituted by ideas that nullify action. This is the essence of Dante's sentiment (it is painful to think that he applies it very cruelly) —

“E cortesia fù, lui esser villano”<sup>1</sup> —

and it is undeniable that a too intense consciousness of one's kinship with all frailties and vices undermines the active heroism which battles against wrong.

But certainly nature has taken care that this danger should not at present be very threatening. One could not fairly describe the generality of one's neighbors as too lucidly aware of manifesting in their own persons the weaknesses which they observe in the rest of her Majesty's subjects; on the contrary, a hasty conclusion as to schemes of Providence might lead to the supposition that one man was intended to correct another by being most intolerant of the ugly quality or trick which he himself possesses. Doubtless philosophers will be able to explain how it must necessarily be so, but pending the full extension of the *à priori* method, which will show that only blockheads could expect anything to be other-

<sup>1</sup> Inferno xxxiii. 150.



wise, it does seem surprising that Heloisa should be disgusted at Laura's attempts to disguise her age, attempts which she recognizes so thoroughly because they enter into her own practice; that Semper, who often responds at public dinners and proposes resolutions on platforms, though he has a trying gestation of every speech and a bad time for himself and others at every delivery, should yet remark pitilessly on the folly of precisely the same course of action in Ubique; that Aliquis, who lets no attack on himself pass unnoticed, and for every handful of gravel against his windows sends a stone in reply, should deplore the ill-advised retorts of Quispiam, who does not perceive that to show one's self angry with an adversary is to gratify him. To be unaware of our own little tricks of manner or our own mental blemishes and excesses is a comprehensible unconsciousness; the puzzling fact is that people should apparently take no account of their deliberate actions, and should expect them to be equally ignored by others. It is an inversion of the accepted order: *there* it is the phrases that are official and the conduct or privately manifested sentiment that is taken to be real; *here* it seems that the practice is taken to be official and entirely nullified by the verbal representation which contradicts it. The thief making a vow to heaven of full restitution and whispering some reservations, expecting to cheat Omniscience by an "aside," is hardly more ludicrous than the many ladies and gentlemen who have more belief, and expect others to have it, in their own statement about their habitual doings than in the contradictory fact which is patent in the daylight. One reason of the absurdity is that we are led by a tradition about ourselves, so that long after a man has practically departed from a rule or principle, he continues innocently to state it as a true description of his practice — just as he has a long tradition that he is not an old gentleman, and is startled when he is seventy at overhearing himself called by an epithet which he has only applied to others.

"A person with your tendency of constitution should take as little sugar as possible," said Pilulus to Bovis somewhere in the darker decades of this century. "It has made a great difference to Avis since he took my advice in that matter: he used to consume half a pound a-day."

"God bless me!" cries Bovis. "I take very little sugar myself."

"Twenty-six large lumps every day of your life, Mr. Bovis," says his wife.

"No such thing!" exclaims Bovis.

"You drop them into your tea, coffee, and whiskey yourself, my dear, and I count them."

"Nonsense!" laughs Bovis, turning to Pilulus, that they may exchange a glance of mutual amusement at a woman's inaccuracy.

But she happened to be right. Bovis had never said inwardly that he would take a large allowance of sugar, and he had the tradition about himself that he was a man of the most moderate habits; hence, with this conviction, he was naturally disgusted at the saccharine excesses of Avis.

I have sometimes thought that this facility of men in believing that they are still what they once meant to be — this undisturbed appropriation of a traditional character which is often but a melancholy relic of early resolutions, like the worn and soiled testimonial to soberness and honesty carried in the pocket of a tippler whom the need of a dram has driven into peculation — may sometimes diminish the turpitude of what seems a flat, barefaced falsehood. It is notorious that a man may go on uttering false assertions about his own acts till he at last believes in them: is it not possible that sometimes in the very first utterance there may be a shade of creed-reciting belief, a reproduction of a traditional self which is clung to against all evidence? There is no knowing all the disguises of the lying serpent.

When we come to examine in detail what is the sane mind in the sane body, the final test of completeness seems to be a security of distinction between what we have professed and what we have done; what we have aimed at and what we have achieved; what we have invented and what we have witnessed or had evidenced to us; what we think and feel in the present and what we thought and felt in the past.

I know that there is a common prejudice which regards the habitual confusion of *now* and *then*, of *it was* and *it is*, of *it seemed so* and *I should like it to be so*, as a mark of high imaginative endowment, while the power of precise statement and description is rated lower, as the attitude of an every-day prosaic mind. High imagination is often assigned or claimed as if it were a ready activity in fabricating extravagances such as are presented by fevered dreams, or as if its possessors were in that state of inability to give credible testimony which would warrant their exclusion from the class of acceptable witnesses in a court of justice; so that a creative genius might fairly be subjected to the disability which some laws

have stamped on dicers, slaves, and other classes whose position was held perverting to their sense of social responsibility.

This endowment of mental confusion is often boasted of by persons whose imaginativeness would not otherwise be known, unless it were by the slow process of detecting that their descriptions and narratives were not to be trusted. Callista is always ready to testify of herself that she is an imaginative person, and sometimes adds in illustration, that if she had taken a walk and seen an old heap of stones on her way, the account she would give on returning would include many pleasing particulars of her own invention, transforming the simple heap into an interesting castellated ruin. This creative freedom is all very well in the right place, but before I can grant it to be a sign of unusual mental power, I must inquire whether, on being requested to give a precise description of what she saw, she would be able to cast aside her arbitrary combinations and recover the objects she really perceived so as to make them recognizable by another person who passed the same way. Otherwise her glorifying imagination is not an addition to the fundamental power of strong, discerning perception, but a cheaper substitute. And, in fact, I find on listening to Callista's conversation, that she has a very lax conception even of common objects, and an equally lax memory of events. It seems of no consequence to her whether she shall say that a stone is overgrown with moss or with lichen, that a building is of sandstone or of granite, that Melibœus once forgot to put on his cravat or that he always appears without it; that everybody says so, or that one stockbroker's wife said so yesterday; that Philemon praised Euphemia up to the skies, or that he denied knowing any particular evil of her. She is one of those respectable witnesses who would testify to the exact moment of an apparition, because any desirable moment will be as exact as another to her remembrance; or who would be the most worthy to witness the action of spirits on slates and tables because the action of limbs would not probably arrest her attention. She would describe the surprising phenomena exhibited by the powerful Medium with the same freedom that she vaunted in relation to the old heap of stones. Her supposed imaginativeness is simply a very usual lack of discriminating perception, accompanied with a less usual activity of misrepresentation, which, if it had been a little more intense, or had been stimulated by circumstance, might have made her a profuse writer unchecked by the troublesome need of veracity.

These characteristics are the very opposite of such as yield a fine imagination, which is always based on a keen vision, a keen consciousness of what *is*, and carries the store of definite knowledge as material for the construction of its inward visions. Witness Dante, who is at once the most precise and homely in his reproduction of actual objects, and the most soaringly at large in his imaginative combinations. On a much lower level we distinguish the hyperbole and rapid development in descriptions of persons and events which are lit up by humorous intention in the speaker — we distinguish this charming play of intelligence which resembles musical improvisation on a given motive, where the farthest sweep of curve is looped into relevancy by an instinctive method, from the florid inaccuracy or helpless exaggeration which is really something commoner than the correct simplicity often depreciated as prosaic.

Even if high imagination were to be identified with illusion, there would be the same sort of difference between the imperial wealth of illusion which is informed by industrious submissive observation and the trumpery stage-property illusion which depends on the ill-defined impressions gathered by capricious inclination as there is between a good and a bad picture of the Last Judgment. In both these the subject is a combination never actually witnessed, and in the good picture the general combination may be of surpassing boldness; but on examination it is seen that the separate elements have been closely studied from real objects. And even where we find the charm of ideal elevation with wrong drawing and fantastic color, the charm is dependent on the selective sensibility of the painter to certain real delicacies of form which confer the expression he longed to render; for apart from this basis of an effect perceived in common, there could be no conveyance of æsthetic meaning by the painter to the beholder. In this sense it is as true to say of Fra Angelico's Coronation of the Virgin, that it has a strain of reality, as to say so of a portrait by Rembrandt, which also has its strain of ideal elevation due to Rembrandt's virile selective sensibility.

To correct such self-flatterers as Callista, it is worth repeating that powerful imagination is not false outward vision, but intense inward representation, and a creative energy constantly fed by susceptibility to the veriest minutiae of experience, which it reproduces and constructs in fresh and fresh wholes; not the habitual confusion of provable fact with the fictions of fancy and transient inclination, but a breadth of ideal as-

sociation which informs every material object, every incidental fact with far-reaching memories and stored residues of passion, bringing into new light the less obvious relations of human existence. The illusion to which it is liable is not that of habitually taking duckponds for lilled pools, but of being more or less transiently and in varying degrees so absorbed in ideal vision as to lose the consciousness of surrounding objects or occurrences; and when that rapt condition is past, the sane genius discriminates clearly between what has been given in this parenthetic state of excitement, and what he has known, and may count on, in the ordinary world of experience. Dante seems to have expressed these conditions perfectly in that passage of the *Purgatorio* where, after a triple vision which has made him forget his surroundings, he says —

“Quando l'anima mia tornò di fuori  
Alle cose che son fuor di lei vere,  
Io riconobbi i miei non falsi errori.” — (c. xv.)

He distinguishes the ideal truth of his entranced vision from the series of external facts to which his consciousness had returned. Isaiah gives us the date of his vision in the Temple — “the year that King Uzziah died” — and if afterwards the mighty-winged seraphim were present with him as he trod the street, he doubtless knew them for images of memory, and did not cry “Look!” to the passers-by.

Certainly the seer, whether prophet, philosopher, scientific discoverer, or poet, may happen to be rather mad: his powers may have been used up, like Don Quixote's, in their visionary or theoretic constructions, so that the reports of common-sense fail to affect him, or the continuous strain of excitement may have robbed his mind of its elasticity. It is hard for our frail mortality to carry the burden of greatness with steady gait and full alacrity of perception. But he is the strongest seer who can support the stress of creative energy and yet keep that sanity of expectation which consists in distinguishing, as Dante does, between the *cose che son vere* outside the individual mind, and the *non falsi errori* which are the revelations of true imaginative power.

#### XIV.

#### THE TOO READY WRITER.

ONE who talks too much, hindering the rest of the company from taking their turn, and apparently seeing no reason why they should not rather desire to know his opinion or experience in relation to all subjects, or at least to renounce the discussion of any topic where he can make no figure, has never been praised for this industrious monopoly of work which others would willingly have shared in. However various and brilliant his talk may be, we suspect him of impoverishing us by excluding the contributions of other minds, which attract our curiosity the more because he has shut them up in silence. Besides, we get tired of a "manner" in conversation as in painting, when one theme after another is treated with the same lines and touches. I begin with a liking for an estimable master, but by the time he has stretched his interpretation of the world unbrokenly along a palatial gallery, I have had what the cautious Scotch mind would call "enough" of him. There is monotony and narrowness already to spare in my own identity; what comes to me from without should be larger and more impartial than the judgment of any single interpreter. On this ground even a modest person, without power or will to shine in the conversation, may easily find the predominating talker a nuisance, while those who are full of matter on special topics are continually detecting miserably thin places in the web of that information which he will not desist from imparting. Nobody that I know of ever proposed a testimonial to a man for thus volunteering the whole expense of the conversation.

Why is there a different standard of judgment with regard to a writer who plays much the same part in literature as the excessive talker plays in what is traditionally called conversation? The busy Adrastus, whose professional engagements might seem more than enough for the nervous energy of one man, and who yet finds time to print essays on the chief current subjects, from the tri-lingual inscriptions, or the Idea of

the Infinite among the prehistoric Lapps, to the Colorado beetle and the grape disease in the south of France, is generally praised if not admired for the breadth of his mental range and his gigantic powers of work. Poor Theron, who has some original ideas on a subject to which he has given years of research and meditation, has been waiting anxiously from month to month to see whether his condensed exposition will find a place in the next advertised programme, but sees it, on the contrary, regularly excluded, and twice the space he asked for filled with the copious brew of Adrastus, whose name carries custom like a celebrated trademark. Why should the eager haste to tell what he thinks on the shortest notice, as if his opinion were a needed preliminary to discussion, get a man the reputation of being a conceited bore in conversation, when nobody blames the same tendency if it shows itself in print? The excessive talker can only be in one gathering at a time, and there is the comfort of thinking that everywhere else other fellow-citizens who have something to say may get a chance of delivering themselves; but the exorbitant writer can occupy space and spread over it the more or less agreeable flavor of his mind in four "mediums" at once, and on subjects taken from the four winds. Such restless and versatile occupants of literary space and time should have lived earlier when the world wanted summaries of all extant knowledge, and this knowledge being small, there was the more room for commentary and conjecture. They might have played the part of an Isidor of Seville or a Vincent of Beauvais brilliantly, and the willingness to write everything themselves would have been strictly in place. In the present day, the busy retailer of other people's knowledge which he has spoiled in the handling, the restless guesser and commentator, the importunate hawker of undesirable superfluities, the everlasting word-compeller who rises early in the morning to praise what the world has already glorified, or makes himself haggard at night in writing out his dissent from what nobody ever believed, is not simply "*gratis anhelans, multa agendo nihil agens*"—he is an obstruction. Like an incompetent architect with too much interest at his back, he obtrudes his ill-considered work where place ought to have been left to better men.

Is it out of the question that we should entertain some scruple about mixing our own flavor, as of the too cheap and insistent nutmeg, with that of every great writer and every great subject?—especially when our flavor is all we have to give, the matter or knowledge having been already given by

somebody else. What if we were only like the Spanish wine-skins which impress the innocent stranger with the notion that the Spanish grape has naturally a taste of leather? One could wish that even the greatest minds should leave some themes unhandled, or at least leave us no more than a paragraph or two on them to show how well they did in not being more lengthy.

Such entertainment of scruple can hardly be expected from the young; but happily their readiness to mirror the universe anew for the rest of mankind is not encouraged by easy publicity. In the vivacious Pepin I have often seen the image of my early youth, when it seemed to me astonishing that the philosophers had left so many difficulties unsolved, and that so many great themes had raised no great poet to treat them. I had an elated sense that I should find my brain full of theoretic clews when I looked for them, and that wherever a poet had not done what I expected, it was for want of my insight. Not knowing what had been said about the play of Romeo and Juliet, I felt myself capable of writing something original on its blemishes and beauties. In relation to all subjects I had a joyous consciousness of that ability which is prior to knowledge, and of only needing to apply myself in order to master any task — to conciliate philosophers whose systems were at present but dimly known to me, to estimate foreign poets whom I had not yet read, to show up mistakes in an historical monograph that roused my interest in an epoch which I had been hitherto ignorant of, when I should once have had time to verify my views of probability by looking into an encyclopædia. So Pepin; save only that he is industrious while I was idle. Like the astronomer in *Rasselas*, I swayed the universe in my consciousness without making any difference outside me; whereas Pepin, while feeling himself powerful with the stars in their courses, really raises some dust here below. He is no longer in his spring-tide, but having been always busy he has been obliged to use his first impressions as if they were deliberate opinions, and to range himself on the corresponding side in ignorance of much that he commits himself to; so that he retains some characteristics of a comparatively tender age, and among them a certain surprise that there have not been more persons equal to himself. Perhaps it is unfortunate for him that he early gained a hearing, or at least a place in print, and was thus encouraged in acquiring a fixed habit of writing, to the exclusion of any other bread-winning pursuit. He is already to be classed as a



"general writer," corresponding to the comprehensive wants of the "general reader," and with this industry on his hands it is not enough for him to keep up the ingenuous self-reliance of youth: he finds himself under an obligation to be skilled in various methods of seeming to know; and having habitually expressed himself before he was convinced, his interest in all subjects is chiefly to ascertain that he has not made a mistake, and to feel his infallibility confirmed. That impulse to decide, that vague sense of being able to achieve the unattained, that dream of aerial unlimited movement at will without feet or wings, which were once but the joyous mounting of young sap, are already taking shape as unalterable woody fibre: the impulse has hardened into "style," and into a pattern of peremptory sentences; the sense of ability in the presence of other men's failures is turning into the official arrogance of one who habitually issues directions which he has never himself been called on to execute; the dreamy buoyancy of the stripling has taken on a fatal sort of reality in written pretensions which carry consequences. He is on the way to become like the loud-buzzing, bouncing *Bombus* who combines conceited illusions enough to supply several patients in a lunatic asylum with the freedom to show himself at large in various forms of print. If one who takes himself for the telegraphic centre of all American wires is to be confined as unfit to transact affairs, what shall we say to the man who believes himself in possession of the unexpressed motives and designs dwelling in the breasts of all sovereigns and all politicians? And I grieve to think that poor Pepin, though less political, may by and by manifest a persuasion hardly more sane, for he is beginning to explain people's writing by what he does not know about them. Yet he was once at the comparatively innocent stage which I have confessed to be that of my own early astonishment at my powerful originality; and copying the just humility of the old Puritan, I may say, "But for the grace of discouragement, this coxcombry might have been mine."

Pepin made for himself a necessity of writing (and getting printed) before he had considered whether he had the knowledge or belief that would furnish eligible matter. At first perhaps the necessity galled him a little, but it is now as easily borne, nay, is as irrepressible a habit as the outpouring of inconsiderate talk. He is gradually being condemned to have no genuine impressions, no direct consciousness of enjoyment or the reverse from the quality of what is before him;

his perceptions are continually arranging themselves in forms suitable to a printed judgment, and hence they will often turn out to be as much to the purpose if they are written without any direct contemplation of the object, and are guided by a few external conditions which serve to classify it for him. In this way he is irrevocably losing the faculty of accurate mental vision: having bound himself to express judgments which will satisfy some other demands than that of veracity, he has blunted his perceptions by continual preoccupation. We cannot command veracity at will: the power of seeing and reporting truly is a form of health that has to be delicately guarded, and as an ancient Rabbi has solemnly said, "The penalty of untruth is untruth." But Pepin is only a mild example of the fact that incessant writing with a view to printing carries internal consequences which have often the nature of disease. And however unpractical it may be held to consider whether we have anything to print which it is good for the world to read, or which has not been better said before, it will perhaps be allowed to be worth considering what effect the printing may have on ourselves. Clearly there is a sort of writing which helps to keep the writer in a ridiculously contented ignorance; raising in him continually the sense of having delivered himself effectively, so that the acquirement of more thorough knowledge seems as superfluous as the purchase of costume for a past occasion. He has invested his vanity (perhaps his hope of income) in his own shallownesses and mistakes, and must desire their prosperity. Like the professional prophet, he learns to be glad of the harm that keeps up his credit, and to be sorry for the good that contradicts him. It is hard enough for any of us, amid the changing winds of fortune and the hurly-burly of events, to keep quite clear of a gladness which is another's calamity; but one may choose not to enter on a course which will turn such gladness into a fixed habit of mind, committing ourselves to be continually pleased that others should appear to be wrong in order that we may have the air of being right.

In some cases, perhaps, it might be urged that Pepin has remained the more self-contented because he has *not* written everything he believed himself capable of. He once asked me to read a sort of programme of the species of romance which he should think it worth while to write—a species which he contrasted in strong terms with the productions of illustrious but overrated authors in this branch. Pepin's romance was to present the splendors of the Roman Empire

at the culmination of its grandeur, when decadence was spiritually but not visibly imminent: it was to show the workings of human passion in the most pregnant and exalted of human circumstances, the designs of statesmen, the interfusion of philosophies, the rural relaxation and converse of immortal poets, the majestic triumphs of warriors, the mingling of the quaint and sublime in religious ceremony, the gorgeous delirium of gladiatorial shows, and under all the secretly working leaven of Christianity. Such a romance would not call the attention of society to the dialect of stable-boys, the low habits of rustics, the vulgarity of small schoolmasters, the manners of men in livery, or to any other form of uneducated talk and sentiments: its characters would have virtues and vices alike on the grand scale, and would express themselves in an English representing the discourse of the most powerful minds in the best Latin, or possibly Greek, when there occurred a scene with a Greek philosopher on a visit to Rome or resident there as a teacher. In this way Pepin would do in fiction what had never been done before: something not at all like "Rienzi" or "Notre Dame de Paris," or any other attempt of that kind; but something at once more penetrating and more magnificent, more passionate and more philosophical, more panoramic yet more select: something that would present a conception of a gigantic period; in short, something truly Roman and world-historical.

When Pepin gave me this programme to read he was much younger than at present. Some slight success in another vein diverted him from the production of panoramic and select romance, and the experience of not having tried to carry out his programme has naturally made him more biting and sarcastic on the failures of those who have actually written romances without apparently having had a glimpse of a conception equal to his. Indeed, I am often comparing his rather touchingly inflated *naïveté*, as of a small young person walking on tiptoe while he is talking of elevated things, at the time when he felt himself the author of that unwritten romance, with his present epigrammatic curtness and affectation of power kept strictly in reserve. His paragraphs now seem to have a bitter smile in them, from the consciousness of a mind too penetrating to accept any other man's ideas, and too equally competent in all directions to exclude his power in any one form of creation, but rather fitted to hang over them all as a lamp of guidance to the stumblers below. You perceive how proud he is of not being indebted to any

writer: even with the dead he is on the creditor's side, for he is doing them the service of letting the world know what they meant better than those poor pre-Pepinians themselves had any means of doing, and he treats the mighty shades very cavalierly.

Is this fellow-citizen of ours, considered simply in the light of a baptized Christian and tax-paying Englishman, really as madly conceited, as empty of reverential feeling, as unvarnished and careless of justice, as full of catch-penny devices and stagey attitudinizing as on examination his writings shows itself to be? By no means. He has arrived at his present pass in "the literary calling" through the self-imposed obligation to give himself a manner which would convey the impression of superior knowledge and ability. He is much worthier and more admirable than his written productions, because the moral aspects exhibited in his writing are felt to be ridiculous or disgraceful in the personal relations of life. In blaming Pepin's writing we are accusing the public conscience, which is so lax and ill informed on the momentous bearings of authorship that it sanctions the total absence of scruple in undertaking and prosecuting what should be the best warranted of vocations.

Hence I still accept friendly relations with Pepin, for he has much private amiability, and though he probably thinks of me as a man of slender talents, without rapidity of *coup d'œil* and with no compensatory penetration, he meets me very cordially, and would not, I am sure, willingly pain me in conversation by crudely declaring his low estimate of my capacity. Yet I have often known him to insult my betters and contribute (perhaps unreflectingly) to encourage injurious conceptions of them — but that was done in the course of his professional writing, and the public conscience still leaves such writing nearly on the level of the Merry-Andrew's dress, which permits an impudent deportment and extraordinary gambols to one who in his ordinary clothing shows himself the decent father of a family.

## XV.

### DISEASES OF SMALL AUTHORSHIP.

PARTICULAR callings, it is known, encourage particular diseases. There is a painter's colic: the Sheffield grinder falls a victim to the inhalation of steel dust: clergymen so often have a certain kind of sore throat that this otherwise secular ailment gets named after them. And perhaps, if we were to inquire, we should find a similar relation between certain moral ailments and these various occupations, though here in the case of clergymen there would be specific differences: the poor curate, equally with the rector, is liable to clergyman's sore throat, but he would probably be found free from the chronic moral ailments encouraged by the possession of glebe and those higher chances of preferment which follow on having a good position already. On the other hand, the poor curate might have severe attacks of calculating expectancy concerning parishioners' turkeys, chooses, and fat geese, or of uneasy rivalry for the donations of clerical charities.

Authors are so miscellaneous a class that their personified diseases, physical and moral, might include the whole procession of human disorders, led by dyspepsia and ending in madness — the awful Dumb Show of a world-historic tragedy. Take a large enough area of human life and all comedy melts into tragedy, like the Fool's part by the side of Lear. The chief scenes get filled with erring heroes, guileful usurpers, persecuted discoverers, dying deliverers: everywhere the protagonist has a part pregnant with doom. The comedy sinks to an accessory, and if there are loud laughs they seem a convulsive transition from sobs; or if the comedy is touched with a gentle lovingness, the panoramic scene is one where

"Sadness is a kind of mirth  
So mingled as if mirth did make us sad  
And sadness merry." <sup>1</sup>

But I did not set out on the wide survey that would carry me into tragedy, and in fact had nothing more serious in my

<sup>1</sup> Two Noble Kinsmen.

mind than certain small chronic ailments that come of small authorship. I was thinking principally of Vorticella, who flourished in my youth not only as a portly lady walking in silk attire, but also as the authoress of a book entitled "The Channel Islands, with Notes and an Appendix." I would by no means make it a reproach to her that she wrote no more than one book; on the contrary, her stopping there seems to me a laudable example. What one would have wished, after experience, was that she had refrained from producing even that single volume, and thus from giving her self-importance a troublesome kind of double incorporation which became oppressive to her acquaintances, and set up in herself one of those slight chronic forms of disease to which I have just referred. She lived in the considerable provincial town of Pumpiter, which had its own newspaper press, with the usual divisions of political partisanship and the usual varieties of literary criticism — the florid and allusive, the *stuccato* and peremptory, the clairvoyant and prophetic, the safe and pattern-phrased, or what one might call "the many-a-long-day style."

Vorticella being the wife of an important townsman had naturally the satisfaction of seeing "The Channel Islands" reviewed by all the organs of Pumpiter opinion, and their articles or paragraphs held as naturally the opening pages in the elegantly bound album prepared by her for the reception of "critical opinions." This ornamental volume lay on a special table in her drawing-room close to the still more gorgeously bound work of which it was the significant effect, and every guest was allowed the privilege of reading what had been said of the authoress and her work in the "Pumpiter Gazette and Literary Watchman," the "Pumpshire Post," the "Church Clock," the "Independent Monitor," and the lively but judicious publication known as the "Medley Pie;" to be followed up, if he chose, by the instructive perusal of the strikingly confirmatory judgments, sometimes concurrent in the very phrases, of journals from the most distant counties; as the "Latchgate Argus," the "Penllwy Universe," the "Cockaleekie Advertiser," the "Goodwin Sands Opinion," and the "Land's End Times."

I had friends in Pumpiter and occasionally paid a long visit there. When I called on Vorticella, who had a cousinship with my hosts, she had to excuse herself because a message claimed her attention for eight or ten minutes, and handing me the album of critical opinions said, with a certain emphasis which, considering my youth, was highly complimentary, that

she would really like me to read what I should find there. This seemed a permissive politeness which I could not feel to be an oppression, and I ran my eyes over the dozen pages, each with a strip or islet of newspaper in the centre, with that freedom of mind (in my case meaning freedom to forget) which would be a perilous way of preparing for examination. This *ad libitum* perusal had its interest for me. The private truth being that I had not read "The Channel Islands," I was amazed at the variety of matter which the volume must contain to have impressed these different judges with the writer's surpassing capacity to handle almost all branches of inquiry and all forms of presentation. In Jersey she had shown herself an historian, in Guernsey a poetess, in Alderney a political economist, and in Sark a humorist: there were sketches of character scattered through the pages which might put our "fictionists" to the blush; the style was eloquent and racy, studded with gems of felicitous remark; and the moral spirit throughout was so superior that, said one, "the recording angel" (who is not supposed to take account of literature as such) "would assuredly set down the work as a deed of religion." The force of this eulogy on the part of several reviewers was much heightened by the incidental evidence of their fastidious and severe taste, which seemed to suffer considerably from the imperfections of our chief writers, even the dead and canonized: one afflicted them with the smell of oil, another lacked erudition and attempted (though vainly) to dazzle them with trivial conceits, one wanted to be more philosophical than nature had made him, another in attempting to be comic produced the melancholy effect of a half-starved Merry-Andrew; while one and all, from the author of the "Areopagitica" downwards, had faults of style which must have made an able hand in the "Litchgate Argus" shake the many-glanced head belonging thereto with a smile of compassionate disapproval. Not so the authoress of "The Channel Islands: "Vorticella and Shakespeare were allowed to be faultless. I gathered that no blemishes were observable in the work of this accomplished writer, and the repeated information that she was "second to none" seemed after this superfluous. Her thick octavo — notes, appendix and all — was unflagging from beginning to end; and the "Laud's End Times," using a rather dangerous rhetorical figure, recommended you not to take up the volume unless you had leisure to finish it at a sitting. It had given one writer more pleasure than he had had for many a long day — a sentence which had

a melancholy resonance, suggesting a life of studious languor such as all previous achievements of the human mind failed to stimulate into enjoyment. I think the collection of critical opinions wound up with this sentence, and I had turned back to look at the lithographed sketch of the authoress which fronted the first page of the album, when the fair original re-entered and I laid down the volume on its appropriate table.

"Well, what do you think of them?" said Vorticella, with an emphasis which had some significance unperceived by me. "I know you are a great student. Give me *your* opinion of these opinions."

"They must be very gratifying to you," I answered with a little confusion, for I perceived that I might easily mistake my footing, and I began to have a presentiment of an examination for which I was by no means crammed.

"On the whole — yes," said Vorticella, in a tone of concession. "A few of the notices are written with some pains, but not one of them has really grappled with the chief idea in the appendix. I don't know whether you have studied political economy, but you saw what I said on page 398 about the Jersey fisheries?"

I bowed — I confess it — with the mean hope that this movement in the nape of my neck would be taken as sufficient proof that I had read, marked, and learned. I do not forgive myself for this pantomimic falsehood, but I was young and morally timorous, and Vorticella's personality had an effect on me something like that of a powerful mesmerizer when he directs all his ten fingers towards your eyes, as unpleasantly visible ducts for the invisible stream. I felt a great power of contempt in her, if I did not come up to her expectations.

"Well," she resumed, "you observe that not one of them has taken up that argument. But I hope I convinced you about the drag-nets?"

Here was a judgment on me. Orientally speaking, I had lifted up my foot on the steep descent of falsity and was compelled to set it down on a lower level. "I should think you must be right," said I, inwardly resolving that on the next topic I would tell the truth.

"I *know* that I am right," said Vorticella. "The fact is that no critic in this town is fit to meddle with such subjects, unless it be Volvox, and he, with all his command of language, is very superficial. It is Volvox who writes in the 'Monitor.' I hope you noticed how he contradicts himself?"

My resolution, helped by the equivalence of dangers, stoutly prevailed, and I said, "No."



"No! I am surprised. He is the only one who finds fault with me. He is a Dissenter, you know. The 'Monitor' is the Dissenters' organ, but my husband has been so useful to them in municipal affairs that they would not venture to run my book down; they feel obliged to tell the truth about me. Still Volvox betrays himself. After praising me for my penetration and accuracy, he presently says I have allowed myself to be imposed upon and have let my active imagination run away with me. That is like his dissenting impertinence. Active my imagination may be, but I have it under control. Little Vibrio, who writes the playful notice in the 'Medley Pie,' has a clever hit at Volvox in that passage about the steep decline of imagination, where the loser wants to make it appear that the winner was only run away with. But if you did not notice Volvox's self-contradiction you would not see the point," added Vorticella, with rather a chilling intonation. "Or perhaps you did not read the 'Medley Pie' notice? That is a pity. Do take up the book again. Vibrio is a poor little tripping creature, but, as Mr. Carlyle would say, he has an eye, and he is always lively."

I did take up the book again, and read as demanded.

"It is very ingenious," said I, really appreciating the difficulty of being lively in this connection: it seemed even more wonderful than that a Vibrio should have an eye.

"You are probably surprised to see no notices from the London press," said Vorticella. "I have one — a very remarkable one. But I reserve it until the others have spoken, and then I shall introduce it to wind up. I shall have them reprinted, of course, and inserted in future copies. This from the 'Candelabrum' is only eight lines in length, but full of venom. It calls my style dull and pompous. I think that will tell its own tale, placed after the other critiques."

"People's impressions are so different," said I. "Some persons find 'Don Quixote' dull."

"Yes," said Vorticella, in emphatic chest tones, "dullness is a matter of opinion; but pompous! That I never was and never could be. Perhaps he means that my matter is too important for his taste; and I have no objection to *that*. I did not intend to be trivial. I should just like to read you that passage about the drag-nets, because I could make it clearer to you."

A second (less ornamental) copy was at her elbow and was already opened, when to my great relief another guest was announced, and I was able to take my leave without seeming

to run away from "The Channel Islands," though not without being compelled to carry with me the loan of "the marked copy," which I was to find advantageous in a re-perusal of the appendix, and was only requested to return before my departure from Pumpiter. Looking into the volume now with some curiosity, I found it a very ordinary combination of the commonplace and ambitious, one of those books which one might imagine to have been written under the old Grub Street coercion of hunger and thirst, if they were not known beforehand to be the gratuitous productions of ladies and gentlemen whose circumstances might be called altogether easy, but for an uneasy vanity that happened to have been directed towards authorship. Its importance was that of a polypus, tumor, fungus, or other erratic outgrowth, noxious and disfiguring in its effect on the individual organism which nourishes it. Poor Vorticella might not have been more wearisome on a visit than the majority of her neighbors, but for this disease of magnified self-importance belonging to small authorship. I understand that the chronic complaint of "The Channel Islands" never left her. As the years went on and the publication tended to vanish in the distance for her neighbors' memory, she was still bent on dragging it to the foreground, and her chief interest in new acquaintances was the possibility of lending them her book, entering into all details concerning it, and requesting them to read her album of "critical opinions." This really made her more tiresome than Gregarina, whose distinction was that she had had cholera, and who did not feel herself in her true position with strangers until they knew it.

My experience with Vorticella led me for a time into the false supposition that this sort of fungous disfiguration, which makes Self disagreeably larger, was most common to the female sex; but I presently found that here too the male could assert his superiority and show a more vigorous boredom. I have known a man with a single pamphlet containing an assurance that somebody else was wrong, together with a few approved quotations, produce a more powerful effect of shuddering at his approach than ever Vorticella did with her varied octavo volume, including notes and appendix. Males of more than one nation recur to my memory who produced from their pocket on the slightest encouragement a small pink or buff duodecimo pamphlet, wrapped in silver paper, as a present held ready for an intelligent reader. "A mode of propagandism," you remark in excuse; "they wished to

spread some useful corrective doctrine." Not necessarily; the indoctrination aimed at was perhaps to convince you of their own talents by the sample of an "Ode on Shakespeare's Birthday," or a translation from Horace.

Vorticella may pair off with Monas, who had also written his one book—"Here and There; or, a Trip from Truro to Transylvania"—and not only carried it in his portmanteau when he went on visits, but took the earliest opportunity of depositing it in the drawing-room, and afterwards would enter to look for it, as if under pressure of a need for reference, begging the lady of the house to tell him whether she had seen "a small volume bound in red." One hostess at last ordered it to be carried into his bed-room to save his time; but it presently reappeared in his hands, and was again left with inserted slips of paper on the drawing-room table.

Depend upon it, vanity is human, native alike to men and women; only in the male it is of denser texture, less volatile, so that it less immediately informs you of its presence, but is more massive and capable of knocking you down if you come into collision with it; while in women vanity lays by its small revenges as in a needle-case always at hand. The difference is in muscle and finger-tips, in traditional habits and mental perspective, rather than in the original appetite of vanity. It is an approved method now to explain ourselves by a reference to the races as little like us as possible, which leads me to observe that in Fiji the men use the most elaborate hair-dressing, and that wherever tattooing is in vogue the male expects to carry off the prize of admiration for pattern and workmanship. Arguing analogically, and looking for this tendency of the Fijian or Hawaiian male in the eminent European, we must suppose that it exhibits itself under the forms of civilized apparel; and it would be a great mistake to estimate passionate effort by the effect it produces on our perception or understanding. It is conceivable that a man may have concentrated no less will and expectation on his wrist-bands, gaiters, and the shape of his hat-brim, or an appearance which impresses you as that of the modern "swell," than the Ojibbeway on an ornamentation which seems to us much more elaborate. In what concerns the search for admiration at least, it is not true that the effect is equal to the cause and resembles it. The cause of a flat curl on the masculine forehead, such as might be seen when George the Fourth was king, must have been widely different in quality and intensity from the impression made by that small scroll of hair on

the organ of the beholder. Merely to maintain an attitude and gait which I notice in certain club men, and especially an inflation of the chest accompanying very small remarks, there goes, I am convinced, an expenditure of physical energy little appreciated by the multitude — a mental vision of Self and deeply impressed beholders which is quite without antitype in what we call the effect produced by that hidden process.

No! there is no need to admit that women would carry away the prize of vanity in a competition where differences of custom were fairly considered. A man cannot show his vanity in a tight skirt which forces him to walk sideways down the staircase; but let the match be between the respective vanities of largest beard and tightest skirt, and here too the battle would be to the strong.

## XVI.

### MORAL SWINDLERS.

It is a familiar example of irony in the degradation of words that "what a man is worth" has come to mean how much money he possesses; but there seems a deeper and more melancholy irony in the shrunken meaning that popular or polite speech assigns to "morality" and "morals." The poor part these words are made to play recalls the fate of those pagan divinities who, after being understood to rule the powers of the air and the destinies of men, came down to the level of insignificant demons, or were even made a farcical show for the amusement of the multitude.

Talking to Melissa in a time of commercial trouble, I found her disposed to speak pathetically of the disgrace which had fallen on Sir Gavial Mantrap, because of his conduct in relation to the Eocene Mines, and to other companies ingeniously devised by him for the punishment of ignorance in people of small means: a disgrace by which the poor titled gentleman was actually reduced to live in comparative obscurity on his wife's settlement of one or two hundred thousand in the consols.

"Surely your pity is misapplied," said I, rather dubiously, for I like the comfort of trusting that a correct moral judgment is the strong point in woman (seeing that she has a majority of about a million in our islands), and I imagined that Melissa might have some unexpressed grounds for her opinion. "I should have thought you would rather be sorry for Mantrap's victims — the widows, spinsters, and hard-working fathers whom his unscrupulous haste to make himself rich has cheated of all their savings, while he is eating well, lying softly, and after impudently justifying himself before the public, is perhaps joining in the General Confession with a sense that he is an acceptable object in the sight of God, though decent men refuse to meet him."

"Oh, all that about the Companies, I know, was most unfortunate. In commerce people are led to do so many things,

and he might not know exactly how everything would turn out. But Sir Gavial made a good use of his money, and he is a thoroughly *moral* man."

"What do you mean by a thoroughly moral man?" said I.

"Oh, I suppose every one means the same by that," said Melissa, with a slight air of rebuke. "Sir Gavial is an excellent family man—quite blameless there; and so charitable round his place at Tiptop. Very different from Mr. Barabbas, whose life, my husband tells me, is most objectionable, with actresses and that sort of thing. I think a man's morals should make a difference to us. I'm not sorry for Mr. Barabbas, but *I am* sorry for Sir Gavial Mautrap."

I will not repeat my answer to Melissa, for I fear it was offensively brusque, my opinion being that Sir Gavial was the more pernicious scoundrel of the two, since his name for virtue served as an effective part of a swindling apparatus; and perhaps I hinted that to call such a man moral showed rather a silly notion of human affairs. In fact, I had an angry wish to be instructive, and Melissa, as will sometimes happen, noticed my anger without appropriating my instruction, for I have since heard that she speaks of me as rather violent-tempered, and not over strict in my views of morality.

I wish that this narrow use of words which are wanted in their full meaning were confined to women like Melissa. Seeing that Morality and Morals under their *alias* of Ethics are the subject of voluminous discussion, and their true basis a pressing matter of dispute—seeing that the most famous book ever written on Ethics, and forming a chief study in our colleges, allies ethical with political science or that which treats of the constitution and prosperity of States, one might expect that educated men would find reason to avoid a perversion of language which lends itself to no wider view of life than that of village gossips. Yet I find even respectable historians of our own and of foreign countries, after showing that a king was treacherous, rapacious, and ready to sanction gross breaches in the administration of justice, end by praising him for his pure moral character, by which one must suppose them to mean that he was not lewd nor debauched, not the European twin of the typical Indian potentate whom Macaulay describes as passing his life in chewing bang and fondling dancing-girls. And since we are sometimes told of such maleficent kings that they were religious, we arrive at the curious result that the most serious wide-reaching duties of man lie quite outside both Morality and Religion—the

one of these consisting in not keeping mistresses (and perhaps not drinking too much), and the other in certain ritual and spiritual transactions with God which can be carried on equally well side by side with the basest conduct towards men. With such a classification as this it is no wonder, considering the strong reaction of language on thought, that many minds, dizzy with indigestion of recent science and philosophy, are far to seek for the grounds of social duty, and without entertaining any private intention of committing a perjury which would ruin an innocent man, or seeking gain by supplying bad preserved meats to our navy, feel themselves speculatively obliged to inquire why they should not do so, and are inclined to measure their intellectual subtlety by their dissatisfaction with all answers to this "Why?" It is of little use to theorize in ethics while our habitual phraseology stamps the larger part of our social duties as something that lies aloof from the deepest needs and affections of our nature. The informal definitions of popular language are the only medium through which theory really affects the mass of minds even among the nominally educated; and when a man whose business hours, the solid part of every day, are spent in an unscrupulous course of public or private action which has every calculable chance of causing widespread injury and misery, can be called moral because he comes home to dine with his wife and children and cherishes the happiness of his own hearth, the augury is not good for the use of high ethical and theological disputation.

Not for one moment would one willingly lose sight of the truth that the relation of the sexes and the primary ties of kinship are the deepest roots of human wellbeing, but to make them by themselves the equivalent of morality is to cut off the channels of feeling through which they are the feeders of that wellbeing. They are the original fountains of a sensibility to the claims of others, which is the bond of societies; but being necessarily in the first instance a private good, there is always the danger that individual selfishness will see in them only the best part of its own gain; just as knowledge, navigation, commerce, and all the conditions which are of a nature to awaken men's consciousness of their mutual dependence and to make the world one great society, are the occasions of selfish, unfair action, of war and oppression, so long as the public conscience or chief force of feeling and opinion is not uniform and strong enough in its insistence on what is demanded by the general welfare. And among the influences

that must retard a right public judgment, the degradation of words which involve praise and blame will be reckoned worth protesting against by every mature observer. To rob words of half their meaning, while they retain their dignity as qualifications, is like allowing to men who have lost half their faculties the same high and perilous command which they won in their time of vigor; or like selling food and seeds after fraudulently abstracting their best virtues: in each case what ought to be beneficently strong is fatally enfeebled, if not enpoisoned. Until we have altered our dictionaries and have found some other word than *morality* to stand in popular use for the duties of man to man, let us refuse to accept as moral the contractor who enriches himself by using large machinery to make pasteboard soles pass as leather for the feet of unhappy conscripts fighting at miserable odds against invaders: let us rather call him a miscreant, though he were the tenderest, most faithful of husbands, and contend that his own experience of home happiness makes his reckless infliction of suffering on others all the more atrocious. Let us refuse to accept as moral any political leader who should allow his conduct in relation to great issues to be determined by egoistic passion, and boldly say that he would be less immoral even though he were as lax in his personal habits as Sir Robert Walpole, if at the same time his sense of the public welfare were supreme in his mind, quelling all pottier impulses beneath a magnanimous impartiality. And though we were to find among that class of journalists who live by recklessly reporting injurious rumors, insinuating the blackest motives in opponents, descanting at large and with an air of infallibility on dreams which they both find and interpret, and stimulating bad feeling between nations by abusive writing which is as empty of real conviction as the rage of a pantomime king, and would be ludicrous if its effects did not make it appear diabolical—though we were to find among these a man who was benignancy itself in his own circle, a healer of private differences, a soother in private calamities, let us pronounce him nevertheless flagrantly immoral, a root of hideous cancer in the commonwealth, turning the channels of instruction into feeders of social and political disease.

In opposite ways one sees bad effects likely to be encouraged by this narrow use of the word *morals*, shutting out from its meaning half those actions of a man's life which tell momentously on the well-being of his fellow-citizens, and on the preparation of a future for the children growing up around



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him. Thoroughness of workmanship, care in the execution of every task undertaken, as if it were the acceptance of a trust which it would be a breach of faith not to discharge well, is a form of duty so momentous that if it were to die out from the feeling and practice of a people, all reforms of institutions would be helpless to create national prosperity and national happiness. Do we desire to see public spirit penetrating all classes of the community and affecting every man's conduct, so that he shall make neither the saving of his soul nor any other private saving an excuse for indifference to the general welfare? Well and good. But the sort of public spirit that scamps its bread-winning work, whether with the trowel, the pen, or the overseeing brain, that it may hurry to scenes of political or social agitation, would be as baleful a gift to our people as any malignant demon could devise. One best part of educational training is that which comes through special knowledge and manipulative or other skill, with its usual accompaniment of delight, in relation to work which is the daily bread-winning occupation — which is a man's contribution to the effective wealth of society in return for what he takes as his own share. But this duty of doing one's proper work well, and taking care that every product of one's labor shall be genuinely what it pretends to be, is not only left out of morals in popular speech, it is very little insisted on by public teachers, at least in the only effective way — by tracing the continuous effects of ill-done work. Some of them seem to be still hopeful that it will follow as a necessary consequence from week-day services, ecclesiastical decoration, and improved hymn-books; others apparently trust to descanting on self-culture in general, or to raising a general sense of faulty circumstances; and meanwhile lax, makeshift work from the high conspicuous kind to the average and obscure, is allowed to pass unstamped with the disgrace of immorality, though there is not a member of society who is not daily suffering from it materially and spiritually, and though it is the fatal cause that must degrade our national rank and our commerce in spite of all open markets and discovery of available coal-seams.

I suppose one may take the popular misuse of the words *Morality* and *Morals* as some excuse for certain absurdities which are occasional fashions in speech and writing — certain old lay figures, as ugly as the queerest Asiatic idol, which at different periods get propped into loftiness, and attired in magnificent Venetian drapery, so that whether they have

a human face or not is of little consequence. One is, the notion that there is a radical, irreconcilable opposition between intellect and morality. I do not mean the simple statement of fact, which everybody knows, that remarkably able men have had very faulty morals, and have outraged public feeling even at its ordinary standard; but the supposition that the ablest intellect, the highest genius, will see through morality as a sort of twaddle for bibs and tuckers, a doctrine of dulness, a mere incident in human stupidity. We begin to understand the acceptance of this foolishness by considering that we live in a society where we may hear a treacherous monarch, or a malignant and lying politician, or a man who uses either official or literary power as an instrument of his private partiality or hatred, or a manufacturer who devises the falsification of wares, or a trader who deals in virtueless seed-grains, praised or compassionate because of his excellent morals. Clearly if morality meant no more than such decencies as are practised by these poisonous members of society, it would be possible to say, without suspicion of light-headedness, that morality lay aloof from the grand stream of human affairs, as a small channel fed by the stream and not missed from it. While this form of nonsense is conveyed in the popular use of words, there must be plenty of well-dressed ignorance at leisure to run through a box of books, which will feel itself initiated in the freemasonry of intolleet by a view of life which might take for a Shakespearian motto —

“Fair is foul and foul is fair,  
Hover through the fog and filthy air” —

and will find itself easily provided with striking conversation by the rule of reversing all the judgments on good and evil which have come to be the calendar and clock-work of society. But let our habitual talk give morals their full meaning as the conduct which, in every human relation, would follow from the fullest knowledge and the fullest sympathy — a meaning perpetually corrected and enriched by a more thorough appreciation of dependence in things, and a finer sensibility to both physical and spiritual fact — and this ridiculous ascription of superlative power to minds which have no effective awe-inspiring vision of the human lot, no response of understanding to the connection between duty and the material processes by which the world is kept habitable for cultivated man, will be tacitly discredited without any

need to cite the immortal names that all are obliged to take as the measure of intellectual rank and highly-charged genius.

Suppose a Frenchman — I mean no disrespect to the great French nation, for all nations are afflicted with their peculiar parasitic growths, which are lazy, hungry forms, usually characterized by a disproportionate swallowing apparatus: suppose a Parisian who should shuffle down the Boulevard with a soul ignorant of the gravest cares and the deepest tenderness of manhood, and a frame more or less fevered by debauchery, mentally polishing into utmost refinement of phrase and rhythm verses which were an enlargement on that Shakesperian motto, and worthy of the most expensive title to be furnished by the vendors of such antithetic ware as *Les marguerites de l'Enfer*, or *Les délices de Bételgeuth*. This supposed personage might probably enough regard his negation of those moral sensibilities which make half the warp and woof of human history, his indifference to the hard thinking and hard handiwork of life, to which he owed even his own gauzy mental garments with their spangles of poor paradox, as the royalty of genius, for we are used to witness such self-crowning in many forms of mental alienation; but he would not, I think, be taken, even by his own generation, as a living proof that there can exist such a combination as that of moral stupidity and trivial emphasis of personal indulgence with the large yet finely discriminating vision which marks the intellectual masters of our kind. Doubtless there are many sorts of transfiguration, and a man who has come to be worthy of all gratitude and reverence may have had his swinish period, wallowing in ugly places; but suppose it had been handed down to us that Sophocles or Virgil had at one time made himself scandalous in this way: the works which have consecrated their memory for our admiration and gratitude are not a glorifying of swinishness, but an artistic incorporation of the highest sentiment known to their age.

All these may seem to be wide reasons for objecting to Melissa's pity for Sir Gavial Mantrap on the ground of his good morals; but their connection will not be obscure to any one who has taken pains to observe the links uniting the scattered signs of our social development.

## XVII.

### SHADOWS OF THE COMING RACE.

My friend Trost, who is no optimist as to the state of the universe hitherto, but is confident that at some future period within the duration of the solar system, ours will be the best of all possible worlds — a hope which I always honor as a sign of beneficent qualities — my friend Trost always tries to keep up my spirits under the sight of the extremely unpleasant and disfiguring work by which many of our fellow-creatures have to get their bread, with the assurance that “all this will soon be done by machinery.” But he sometimes neutralizes the consolation by extending it over so large an area of human labor, and insisting so impressively on the quantity of energy which will thus be set free for loftier purposes, that I am tempted to desire an occasional famine of invention in the coming ages, lest the humbler kinds of work should be entirely nullified while there are still left some men and women who are not fit for the highest.

Especially, when one considers the perfunctory way in which some of the most exalted tasks are already executed by those who are understood to be educated for them, there rises a fearful vision of the human race evolving machinery which will by and by throw itself fatally out of work. When, in the Bank of England, I see a wondrously delicate machine for testing sovereigns, a shrewd implacable little steel Rhadamanthus that, once the coins are delivered up to it, lifts and balances each in turn for the fraction of an instant, finds it wanting or sufficient, and dismisses it to right or left with rigorous justice; when I am told of micrometers and thermopiles and tasimeters which deal physically with the invisible, the impalpable, and the unimaginable; of cunning wires and wheels and pointing needles which will register your and my quickness so as to exclude flattering opinion; of a machine for drawing the right conclusion, which will doubtless by and by be improved into an automaton for finding true premises; of a microphone which detects the cadence of the fly's foot

on the ceiling, and may be expected presently to discriminate the noises of our various follies as they soliloquize or converse in our brains — my mind seeming too small for these things, I get a little out of it, like an unfortunate savage too suddenly brought face to face with civilization, and I exclaim —

“Am I already in the shadow of the Coming Race? and will the creatures who are to transcend and finally supersede us be steely organisms, giving out the effluvia of the laboratory, and performing with infallible exactness more than everything that we have performed with a slovenly approximateness and self-defeating inaccuracy?”

“But,” says Trost, treating me with cautious mildness on hearing me vent this raving notion, “you forget that these wonder-workers are the slaves of our race, need our tendance and regulation, obey the mandates of our consciousness, and are only deaf and dumb bringers of reports which we decipher and make use of. They are simply extensions of the human organism, so to speak, limbs immeasurably more powerful, ever more subtle finger-tips, ever more mastery over the invisibly great and the invisibly small. Each new machine needs a new appliance of human skill to construct it, new devices to feed it with material, and often keener-edged faculties to note its registrations or performances. How then can machines supersede us? — they depend upon us. When we cease, they cease.”

“I am not so sure of that,” said I, getting back into my mind, and becoming rather wilful in consequence. “If, as I have heard you contend, machines as they are more and more perfected will require less and less of tendance, how do I know that they may not be ultimately made to carry, or may not in themselves evolve, conditions of self-supply, self-repair, and reproduction, and not only do all the mighty and subtle work possible on this planet better than we could do it, but with the immense advantage of banishing from the earth’s atmosphere screaming consciousnesses which, in our comparatively clumsy race, make an intolerable noise and fuss to each other about every petty ant-like performance, looking on at all work only as it were to spring a rattle here or blow a trumpet there, with a ridiculous sense of being effective? I for my part cannot see any reason why a sufficiently penetrating thinker, who can see his way through a thousand years or so, should not conceive a parliament of machines, in which the manners were excellent and the motions infallible in

logic: one honorable instrument, a remote descendant of the Voltaic family, might discharge a powerful current (entirely without animosity) on an honorable instrument opposite, of more upstart origin, but belonging to the ancient edge-tool race which we already at Sheffield see paring thick iron as if it were mellow cheese — by this unerringly directed discharge operating on movements corresponding to what we call Estimates, and by necessary mechanical consequence on movements corresponding to what we call the Funds, which with a vain analogy we sometimes speak of as “sensitive.” For every machine would be perfectly educated, that is to say, would have the suitable molecular adjustments, which would act not the less infallibly for being free from the fussy accompaniment of that consciousness to which our prejudice gives a supreme governing rank, when in truth it is an idle parasite on the grand sequence of things.”

“Nothing of the sort!” returned Trost, getting angry, and judging it kind to treat me with some severity; “what you have heard me say is, that our race will and must act as a nervous centre to the utmost development of mechanical processes: the subtly refined powers of machines will react in producing more subtly refined thinking processes which will occupy the minds set free from grosser labor. Say, for example, that all the scavengers’ work of London were done, so far as human attention is concerned, by the occasional pressure of a brass button (as in the ringing of an electric bell), you will then have a multitude of brains set free for the exquisite enjoyment of dealing with the exact sequences and high speculations supplied and prompted by the delicate machines which yield a response to the fixed stars, and give readings of the spiral vortices fundamentally concerned in the production of epic poems or great judicial harangues. So far from mankind being thrown out of work according to your notion,” concluded Trost, with a peculiar nasal note of scorn, “if it were not for your incurable dilettanteism in science as in all other things — if you had once understood the action of any delicate machine — you would perceive that the sequences it carries throughout the realm of phenomena would require many generations, perhaps æons, of understandings considerably stronger than yours, to exhaust the store of work it lays open.”

“Precisely,” said I, with a meekness which I felt was praiseworthy; “it is the feebleness of my capacity, bringing me nearer than you to the human average, that perhaps en-



ables me to imagine certain results better than you can. Doubtless the very fishes of our rivers, gullible as they look, and slow as they are to be rightly convinced in another order of facts, form fewer false expectations about each other than we should form about them if we were in a position of somewhat fuller intercourse with their species ; for even as it is we have continually to be surprised that they do not rise to our carefully selected bait. Take me then as a sort of reflective and experienced carp ; but do not estimate the justice of my ideas by my facial expression."

"Pooh!" says Trost. (We are on very intimate terms.)

"Naturally," I persisted, "it is less easy to you than to me to imagine our race transcended and superseded, since the more energy a being is possessed of, the harder it must be for him to conceive his own death. But I, from the point of view of a reflective carp, can easily imagine myself and my congeners dispensed with in the frame of things and giving way not only to a superior but a vastly different kind of Entity. What I would ask you is, to show me why, since each new invention casts a new light along the pathway of discovery, and each new combination or structure brings into play more conditions than its inventor foresaw, there should *not at length* be a machine of such high mechanical and chemical powers that it would find and assimilate the material to supply its own waste, and then by a further evolution of internal molecular movements reproduce itself by some process of fission or budding. This last stage having been reached, either by man's contrivance or as an unforeseen result, one sees that the process of natural selection must drive men altogether out of the field ; for they will long before have begun to sink into the miserable condition of those unhappy characters in fable who, having demons or djinns at their beck, and being obliged to supply them with work, found too much of everything done in too short a time. What demons so potent as molecular movements, none the less tremendously potent for not carrying the futile cargo of a consciousness screeching irrelevantly, like a fowl tied head downmost to the saddle of a swift horseman ? Under such uncomfortable circumstances our race will have diminished with the diminishing call on their energies, and by the time that the self-repairing and reproducing machines arise, all but a few of the rare inventors, calculators, and speculators will have become pale, pulpy, and cretinous from fatty or other degeneration, and behold around them a scanty hydrocephal-

ous offspring. As to the breed of the ingenious and intellectual, their nervous systems will at last have been overwrought in following the molecular revelations of the immensely more powerful unconscious race, and they will naturally, as the less energetic combinations of movement, subside like the flame of a candle in the sunlight. Thus the feebler race, whose corporeal adjustments happened to be accompanied with a maniacal consciousness which imagined itself moving its mover, will have vanished, as all less adapted existences do before the fittest — *i.e.*, the existence composed of the most persistent groups of movements and the most capable of incorporating new groups in harmonious relation. Who — if our consciousness is, as I have been given to understand, a mere stumbling of our organisms on their way to unconscious perfection — who shall say that those fittest existences will not be found along the track of what we call inorganic combinations, which will carry on the most elaborate processes as mutely and painlessly as we are now told that the minerals are metamorphosing themselves continually in the dark laboratory of the earth's crust? Thus this planet may be filled with beings who will be blind and deaf as the inmost rock, yet will execute changes as delicate and complicated as those of human language and all the intricate web of what we call its effects, without sensitive impression, without sensitive impulse: there may be, let us say, mute orations, mute rhapsodies, mute discussions, and no consciousness there even to enjoy the silence."

"Absurd!" grumbled Trost.

"The supposition is logical," said I. "It is well argued from the premises."

"Whose premises?" cried Trost, turning on me with some fierceness. "You don't mean to call them mine, I hope."

"Heaven forbid! They seem to be flying about in the air with other germs, and have found a sort of nidus among my melancholy fancies. Nobody really holds them. They bear the same relation to real belief as walking on the head for a show does to running away from an explosion or walking fast to catch the train."

## XVIII.

### THE MODERN HEP! HEP! HEP!

To discern likeness amidst diversity, it is well known, does not require so fine a mental edge as the discerning of diversity amidst general sameness. The primary rough classification depends on the prominent resemblances of things; the progress is towards finer and finer discrimination according to minute differences.

Yet even at this stage of European culture one's attention is continually drawn to the prevalence of that grosser mental sloth which makes people dull to the most ordinary prompting of comparison — the bringing things together because of their likeness. The same motives, the same ideas, the same practices, are alternately admired and abhorred, lauded and denounced, according to their association with superficial differences, historical or actually social: even learned writers treating of great subjects often show an attitude of mind not greatly superior in its logic to that of the frivolous fine lady who is indignant at the frivolity of her maid.

To take only the subject of the Jews: it would be difficult to find a form of bad reasoning about them which has not been heard in conversation or been admitted to the dignity of print; but the neglect of resemblances is a common property of dullness which unites all the various points of view — the prejudiced, the puerile, the spiteful, and the abysmally ignorant.

That the preservation of national memories is an element and a means of national greatness, that their revival is a sign of reviving nationality, that every heroic defender, every patriotic restorer, has been inspired by such memories and has made them his watchword, that even such a corporate existence as that of a Roman legion or an English regiment has been made valorous by memorial standards, — these are the glorious commonplaces of historic teaching at our public schools and universities, being happily ingrained in Greek and Latin classics. They have also been impressed on the

world by conspicuous modern instances. That there is a free modern Greece is due — through all infiltration of other than Greek blood — to the presence of ancient Greece in the consciousness of European men; and every speaker would feel his point safe if he were to praise Byron's devotion to a cause made glorious by ideal identification with the past; hardly so, if he were to insist that the Greeks were not to be helped further because their history shows that they were anciently unsurpassed in treachery and lying, and that many modern Greeks are highly disreputable characters, while others are disposed to grasp too large a share of our commerce. The same with Italy: the pathos of his country's lot pierced the youthful soul of Mazzini, because, like Dante's, his blood was fraught with the kinship of Italian greatness, his imagination filled with a majestic past that wrought itself into a majestic future. Half a century ago, what was Italy? An idling-place of dilettanteism or of itinerant motiveless wealth, a territory parcelled out for papal sustenance, dynastic convenience, and the profit of an alien Government. What were the Italians? No people, no voice in European counsels, no massive power in European affairs: a race thought of in English and French society as chiefly adapted to the operative stage, or to serve as models for painters; disposed to smile gratefully at the reception of half-pence; and by the more historical remembered to be rather polite than truthful, in all probability a combination of Machiavelli, Rubini, and Masaniello. Thanks chiefly to the divine gift of a memory which inspires the moments with a past, a present, and a future, and gives the sense of corporate existence that raises man above the otherwise more respectable and innocent brute, all that, or most of it, is changed.

Again, one of our living historians finds just sympathy in his vigorous insistence on our true ancestry, on our being the strongly marked heritors in language and genius of those old English seamen who, beholding a rich country with a most convenient seaboard, came, doubtless with a sense of divine warrant, and settled themselves on this or the other side of fertilizing streams, gradually conquering more and more of the pleasant land from the natives who knew nothing of Odin, and finally making unusually clean work in ridding themselves of those prior occupants. "Let us," he virtually says, "let us know who were our forefathers, who it was that won the soil for us, and brought the good seed of those institutions through which we should not arrogantly but gratefully feel

ourselves distinguished among the nations as possessors of long-inherited freedom ; let us not keep up an ignorant kind of naming which disguises our true affinities of blood and language, but let us see thoroughly what sort of notions and traditions our forefathers had, and what sort of song inspired them. Let the poetic fragments which breathe forth their fierce bravery in battle and their trust in fierce gods who helped them, be treasured with affectionate reverence. These seafaring, invading, self-asserting men were the English of old time, and were our fathers who did rough work by which we are profiting. They had virtues which incorporated themselves in wholesome usages to which we trace our own political blessings. Let us know and acknowledge our common relationship to them, and be thankful that over and above the affections and duties which spring from our manhood, we have the closer and more constantly guiding duties which belong to us as Englishmen."

To this view of our nationality most persons who have feeling and understanding enough to be conscious of the connection between the patriotic affection and every other affection which lifts us above emigrating rats and free-loving baboons, will be disposed to say Amen. True, we are not indebted to those ancestors for our religion: we are rather proud of having got that illumination from elsewhere. The men who planted our nation were not Christians, though they began their work centuries after Christ; and they had a decided objection to Christianity when it was first proposed to them: they were not monotheists, and their religion was the reverse of spiritual. But since we have been fortunate enough to keep the island-home they won for us, and have been on the whole a prosperous people, rather continuing the plan of invading and spoiling other lands than being forced to beg for shelter in them, nobody has reproached us because our fathers thirteen hundred years ago worshipped Odin, massacred Britons, and were with difficulty persuaded to accept Christianity, knowing nothing of Hebrew history and the reasons why Christ should be received as the Saviour of mankind. The Red Indians, not liking us when we settled among them, might have been willing to fling such facts in our faces, but they were too ignorant, and besides, their opinions did not signify, because we were able, if we liked, to exterminate them. The Hindoos also have doubtless had their raucors against us and still entertain enough ill-will to make unfavorable remarks on our character, especially as to

our historic rapacity and arrogant notions of our own superiority; they perhaps do not admire the usual English profile, and they are not converted to our way of feeding: but though we are a small number of an alien race profiting by the territory and produce of these prejudiced people, they are unable to turn us out; at least, when they tried we showed them their mistake. We do not call ourselves a dispersed and a punished people: we are a colonizing people, and it is we who have punished others.

Still the historian guides us rightly in urging us to dwell on the virtues of our ancestors with emulation, and to cherish our sense of a common descent as a bond of obligation. The eminence, the nobleness of a people, depends on its capability of being stirred by memories, and of striving for what we call spiritual ends — ends which consist not in immediate material possession, but in the satisfaction of a great feeling that animates the collective body as with one soul. A people having the seed of worthiness in it must feel an answering thrill when it is adjured by the deaths of its heroes who died to preserve its national existence; when it is reminded of its small beginnings and gradual growth through past labors and struggles, such as are still demanded of it in order that the freedom and wellbeing thus inherited may be transmitted unimpaired to children and children's children; when an appeal against the permission of injustice is made to great precedents in its history and to the better genius breathing in its institutions. It is this living force of sentiment in common which makes a national consciousness. Nations so moved will resist conquest with the very breasts of their women, will pay their millions and their blood to abolish slavery, will share privation in famine and all calamity, will produce poets to sing "some great story of a man," and thinkers whose theories will bear the test of action. An individual man, to be harmoniously great, must belong to a nation of this order, if not in actual existence yet existing in the past, in memory, as a departed, invisible, beloved ideal, once a reality, and perhaps to be restored. A common humanity is not yet enough to feed the rich blood of various activity which makes a complete man. The time is not come for cosmopolitanism to be highly virtuous, any more than for communism to suffice for social energy. I am not bound to feel for a Chinaman as I feel for my fellow-countryman: I am bound not to demoralize him with opium, not to compel him to my will by destroying or plundering the fruits of his labor on

the alleged ground that he is not cosmopolitan enough, and not to insult him for his want of my tailoring and religion when he appears as a peaceable visitor on the London pavement. It is admirable in a Briton with a good purpose to learn Chinese, but it would not be a proof of fine intellect in him to taste Chinese poetry in the original more than he tastes the poetry of his own tongue. Affection, intelligence, duty, radiate from a centre, and nature has decided that for us English folk that centre can be neither China nor Peru. Most of us feel this unreflectingly; for the affectation of undervaluing everything native, and being too fine for one's own country, belongs only to a few minds of no dangerous leverage. What is wanting is, that we should recognize a corresponding attachment to nationality as legitimate in every other people, and understand that its absence is a privation of the greatest good.

For, to repeat, not only the nobleness of a nation depends on the presence of this national consciousness, but also the nobleness of each individual citizen. Our dignity and rectitude are proportioned to our sense of relationship with something great, admirable, pregnant with high possibilities, worthy of sacrifice, a continual inspiration to self-repression and discipline by the presentation of aims larger and more attractive to our generous part than the securing of personal ease or prosperity. And a people possessing this good should surely feel not only a ready sympathy with the effort of those who, having lost the good, strive to regain it, but a profound pity for any degradation resulting from its loss; nay, something more than pity when happier nationalities have made victims of the unfortunate whose memories nevertheless are the very fountain to which the persecutors trace their most vaunted blessings.

These notions are familiar: few will deny them in the abstract, and many are found loudly asserting them in relation to this or the other particular case. But here as elsewhere, in the ardent application of ideas, there is a notable lack of simple comparison or sensibility to resemblance. The European world has long been used to consider the Jews as altogether exceptional, and it has followed naturally enough that they have been excepted from the rules of justice and mercy, which are based on human likeness. But to consider a people whose ideas have determined the religion of half the world, and that the more cultivated half, and who made the most eminent struggle against the power of Rome, as a purely

exceptional race, is a demoralizing offence against rational knowledge, a stultifying inconsistency in historical interpretation. Every nation of forcible character — *i.e.*, of strongly marked characteristics, is so far exceptional. The distinctive note of each bird-species is in this sense exceptional, but the necessary ground of such distinction is a deeper likeness. The superlative peculiarity in the Jews admitted, our affinity with them is only the more apparent when the elements of their peculiarity are discerned.

From whatever point of view the writings of the Old Testament may be regarded, the picture they present of a national development is of high interest and speciality, nor can their historic momentousness be much affected by any varieties of theory as to the relation they bear to the New Testament or to the rise and constitution of Christianity. Whether we accept the canonical Hebrew books as a revelation or simply as part of an ancient literature, makes no difference to the fact that we find there the strongly characterized portraiture of a people educated from an earlier or later period to a sense of separateness unique in its intensity, a people taught by many concurrent influences to identify faithfulness to its national traditions with the highest social and religious blessings. Our too scanty sources of Jewish history, from the return under Ezra to the beginning of the desperate resistance against Rome, show us the heroic and triumphant struggle of the Maccabees, which rescued the religion and independence of the nation from the corrupting sway of the Syrian Greeks, adding to the glorious sum of its memorials, and stimulating continuous efforts of a more peaceful sort to maintain and develop that national life which the heroes had fought and died for, by internal measures of legal administration and public teaching. Thenceforth the virtuous elements of the Jewish life were engaged, as they had been with varying aspects during the long and changeful prophetic period and the restoration under Ezra, on the side of preserving the specific national character against a demoralizing fusion with that of foreigners whose religion and ritual were idolatrous and often obscene. There was always a Foreign party reviling the National party as narrow, and sometimes manifesting their own breadth in extensive views of advancement or profit to themselves by flattery of a foreign power. Such internal conflict naturally tightened the bands of conservatism, which needed to be strong if it were to rescue the sacred ark, the vital spirit of a small nation — “the smallest of the nations” — whose territory lay on the



highway between three continents; and when the dread and hatred of foreign sway had condensed itself into dread and hatred of the Romans, many Conservatives became Zealots, whose chief mark was that they advocated resistance to the death against the submergence of their nationality. Much might be said on this point towards distinguishing the desperate struggle against a conquest which is regarded as degradation and corruption, from rash, hopeless insurrection against an established native government; and for my part (if that were of any consequence) I share the spirit of the Zealots. I take the spectacle of the Jewish people defying the Roman edict, and preferring death by starvation or the sword to the introduction of Caligula's deified statue into the temple, as a sublime type of steadfastness. But all that need be noticed here is the continuity of that national education (by outward and inward circumstance) which created in the Jews a feeling of race, a sense of corporate existence, unique in its intensity.

But not, before the dispersion, unique in essential qualities. There is more likeness than contrast between the way we English got our island and the way the Israelites got Canaan. We have not been noted for forming a low estimate of ourselves in comparison with foreigners, or for admitting that our institutions are equalled by those of any other people under the sun. Many of us have thought that our sea-wall is a specially divine arrangement to make and keep us a nation of sea-kings after the manner of our forefathers, secure against invasion and able to invade other lands when we need them, though they may lie on the other side of the ocean. Again, it has been held that we have a peculiar destiny as a Protestant people, not only able to bruise the head of an idolatrous Christianity in the midst of us, but fitted as possessors of the most truth and the most tonnage to carry our purer religion over the world and convert mankind to our way of thinking. The Puritans, asserting their liberty to restrain tyrants, found the Hebrew history closely symbolical of their feelings and purpose; and it can hardly be correct to cast the blame of their less laudable doings on the writings they invoked, since their opponents made use of the same writings for different ends, finding there a strong warrant for the divine right of kings and the denunciation of those who, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, took on themselves the office of the priesthood, which belonged of right solely to Aaron and his sons, or, in other words, to men ordained by the English bishops. We must rather refer the passionate use of the Hebrew writings to affin-

ities of disposition between our own race and the Jewish. Is it true that the arrogance of a Jew was so immeasurably beyond that of a Calvinist? And the just sympathy and admiration which we give to the ancestors who resisted the oppressive acts of our native kings, and by resisting rescued or won for us the best part of our civil and religious liberties — is it justly to be withheld from those brave and steadfast men of Jewish race who fought and died, or strove by wise administration to resist, the oppression and corrupting influences of foreign tyrants, and by resisting, rescued the nationality which was the very hearth of our own religion? At any rate, seeing that the Jews were more specifically than any other nation educated into a sense of their supreme moral value, the chief matter of surprise is that any other nation is found to rival them in this form of self-confidence.

More exceptional — less like the course of our own history — has been their dispersion and their subsistence as a separate people through ages in which for the most part they were regarded and treated very much as beasts hunted for the sake of their skins, or of a valuable secretion peculiar to their species. The Jews showed a talent for accumulating what was an object of more immediate desire to Christians than animal oils or well-furred skins, and their cupidity and avarice were found at once particularly hateful and particularly useful: hateful when seen as a reason for punishing them by mulcting or robbery, useful when this retributive process could be successfully carried forward. Kings and emperors naturally were more alive to the usefulness of subjects who could gather and yield money; but edicts issued to protect "the King's Jews" equally with the King's game from being harassed and hunted by the commonalty were only slight mitigations to the deplorable lot of a race held to be under the divine curse, and had little force after the Crusades began. As the slave-holders in the United States counted the curse on Ham a justification of negro slavery, so the curse on the Jews was counted a justification for hindering them from pursuing agriculture and handicrafts; for marking them out as execrable figures by a peculiar dress; for torturing them to make them part with their gains, or for more gratuitously spitting at them and pelting them; for taking it as certain that they killed and ate babies, poisoned the wells, and took pains to spread the plague; for putting it to them whether they would be baptized or burned, and not failing to burn and massacre them when they were obstinate; but also for suspecting them of disliking the baptism when

they had got it, and then burning them in punishment of their insincerity; finally, for hounding them by tens on tens of thousands from the homes where they had found shelter for centuries, and inflicting on them the horrors of a new exile and a new dispersion. All this to avenge the Saviour of mankind, or else to compel these stiff-necked people to acknowledge a Master whose servants showed such beneficent effects of His teaching.

With a people so treated one of two issues was possible: either from being of feebleness of nature than their persecutors, and caring more for ease than for the sentiments and ideas which constituted their distinctive character, they would everywhere give way to pressure and get rapidly merged in the populations around them; or, being endowed with uncommon tenacity, physical and mental, feeling peculiarly the ties of inheritance both in blood and faith, remembering national glories, trusting in their recovery, abhorring apostasy, able to bear all things and hope all things with the consciousness of being steadfast to spiritual obligations, the kernel of their number would harden into an inflexibility more and more insured by motive and habit. They would cherish all differences that marked them off from their hated oppressors, all memories that consoled them with a sense of virtual though unrecognized superiority; and the separateness which was made their badge of ignominy would be their inward pride, their source of fortifying defiance. Doubtless such a people would get confirmed in vices. An oppressive government and a persecuting religion, while breeding vices in those who hold power, are well known to breed answering vices in those who are powerless and suffering. What more direct plan than the course presented by European history could have been pursued in order to give the Jews a spirit of bitter isolation, of scorn for the wolfish hypocrisy that made victims of them, of triumph in prospering at the expense of the blunders who stoned them away from the open paths of industry? — or, on the other hand, to encourage in the less defiant a lying conformity, a pretence of conversion for the sake of the social advantages attached to baptism, an outward renunciation of their hereditary ties with the lack of real love towards the society and creed which exacted this galling tribute? — or again, in the most unhappy specimens of the race, to rear transcendent examples of odious vice, reckless instruments of rich men with bad propensities, unscrupulous grinders of the alien people who wanted to grind *them*?

No wonder the Jews have their vices: no wonder if it were proved (which it has not hitherto appeared to be) that some of them have a bad pre-eminence in evil, an unrivalled superfluity of naughtiness. It would be more plausible to make a wonder of the virtues which have prospered among them under the shadow of oppression. But instead of dwelling on these, or treating as admitted what any hardy or ignorant person may deny, let us found simply on the loud assertions of the hostile. The Jews, it is said, resisted the expansion of their own religion into Christianity; they were in the habit of spitting on the cross; they have held the name of Christ to be *Anathema*. Who taught them that? The men who made Christianity a curse to them: the men who made the name of Christ a symbol for the spirit of vengeance, and, what was worse, made the execution of the vengeance a pretext for satisfying their own savageness, greed, and envy: the men who sanctioned with the name of Christ a barbaric and blundering copy of pagan fatalism in taking the words "His blood be upon us and on our children" as a divinely appointed verbal warrant for wreaking cruelty from generation to generation on the people from whose sacred writings Christ drew His teaching. Strange retrogression in the professors of an expanded religion, boasting an illumination beyond the spiritual doctrine of Hebrew prophets! For Hebrew prophets proclaimed a God who demanded mercy rather than sacrifices. The Christians also believed that God delighted not in the blood of rams and of bulls, but they apparently conceived Him as requiring for His satisfaction the sighs and groans, the blood and roasted flesh of men whose forefathers had misunderstood the metaphorical character of prophecies which spoke of spiritual pre-eminence under the figure of a material kingdom. Was this the method by which Christ desired His title to the Messiahship to be commended to the hearts and understandings of the nation in which He was born? Many of His sayings bear the stamp of that patriotism which places fellow-countrymen in the inner circle of affection and duty. And did the words "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," refer only to the centurion and his band, a tacit exception being made of every Hebrew there present from the mercy of the Father and the compassion of the Son? — nay, more, of every Hebrew yet to come who remained unconverted after hearing of His claim to the Messiahship, not from His own lips or those of His native apostles, but from the lips of alien men whom cross, creed, and baptism had left cruel,

rapacious, and debauched? It is more reverent to Christ to believe that He must have approved the Jewish martyrs who deliberately chose to be burned or massacred rather than be guilty of a blaspheming lie, more than He approved the rabble of crusaders who robbed and murdered them in His name.

But these remonstrances seem to have no direct application to personages who take up the attitude of philosophic thinkers and discriminating critics, professedly accepting Christianity from a rational point of view as a vehicle of the highest religious and moral truth, and condemning the Jews on the ground that they are obstinate adherents of an outworn creed, maintain themselves in moral alienation from the peoples with whom they share citizenship, and are destitute of real interest in the welfare of the community and state with which they are thus identified. These anti-Judaic advocates usually belong to a party which has felt itself glorified in winning for Jews, as well as Dissenters and Catholics, the full privileges of citizenship, laying open to them every path to distinction. At one time the voice of this party urged that differences of creed were made dangerous only by the denial of citizenship — that you must make a man a citizen before he could feel like one. At present, apparently, this confidence has been succeeded by a sense of mistake: there is a regret that no limiting clauses were insisted on, such as would have hindered the Jews from coming too far and in too large proportion along those opened pathways; and the Romanians are thought to have shown an enviable wisdom in giving them as little chance as possible. But then, the reflection occurring that some of the most objectionable Jews are baptized Christians, it is obvious that such clauses would have been insufficient, and the doctrine that you can turn a Jew into a good Christian is emphatically retracted. But clearly, these liberal gentlemen, too late enlightened by disagreeable events, must yield the palm of wise foresight to those who argued against them long ago; and it is a striking spectacle to witness minds so panting for advancement in some directions that they are ready to force it on an unwilling society, in this instance despairingly recurring to mediæval types of thinking — insisting that the Jews are made viciously cosmopolitan by holding the world's money-bag, that for them all national interests are resolved into the algebra of loans, that they have suffered an inward degradation stamping them as morally inferior, and — "serve them right," since they rejected Christianity. All which is mirrored in an

analogy, namely, that of the Irish, also a servile race, who have rejected Protestantism though it has been repeatedly urged on them by fire and sword and penal laws, and whose place in the moral scale may be judged by our advertisements, where the clause, "No Irish need apply," parallels the sentence which for many polite persons sums up the question of Judaism — "I never *did* like the Jews."

It is certainly worth considering whether an expatriated, denationalized race, used for ages to live among antipathetic populations, must not inevitably lack some conditions of nobleness. If they drop that separateness which is made their reproach, they may be in danger of lapsing into a cosmopolitan indifference equivalent to cynicism, and of missing that inward identification with the nationality immediately around them which might make some amends for their inherited privation. No dispassionate observer can deny this danger. Why, our own countrymen who take to living abroad without purpose or function to keep up their sense of fellowship in the affairs of their own land are rarely good specimens of moral healthiness; still, the consciousness of having a native country, the birthplace of common memories and habits of mind, existing like a parental hearth quitted but beloved; the dignity of being included in a people which has a part in the comity of nations and the growing federation of the world; that sense of special belonging which is the root of human virtues, both public and private, — all these spiritual links may preserve migratory Englishmen from the worst consequences of their voluntary dispersion. Unquestionably the Jews, having been more than any other race exposed to the adverse moral influences of alienism, must, both in individuals and in groups, have suffered some corresponding moral degradation; but in fact they have escaped with less of abjectness and less of hard hostility towards the nations whose hand has been against them, than could have happened in the case of a people who had neither their adhesion to a separate religion founded on historic memories, nor their characteristic family affectionateness. Tortured, flogged, spit upon, the *corpus vile* on which rage or wantonness vented themselves with impunity, their name flung at them as an opprobrium by superstition, hatred, and contempt, they have remained proud of their origin. Does any one call this an evil pride? Perhaps he belongs to that order of man who, while he has a democratic dislike to dukes and earls, wants to make believe that his father was an idle gentleman, when in

fact he was an honorable artisan, or who would feel flattered to be taken for other than an Englishman." It is possible to be too arrogant about our blood or our calling, but that arrogance is virtue compared with such mean pretence. The pride which identifies us with a great historic body is a humanizing, elevating habit of mind, inspiring sacrifices of individual comfort, gain, or other selfish ambition, for the sake of that ideal whole: and no man swayed by such a sentiment can become completely abject. That a Jew of Smyrna, where a whip is carried by passengers ready to flog off the too officious specimens of his race, can still be proud to say, "I am a Jew," is surely a fact to awaken admiration in a mind capable of understanding what we may call the ideal forces in human history. And again, a varied, impartial observation of the Jews in different countries tends to the impression that they have a predominant kindliness which must have been deeply ingrained in the constitution of their race to have outlasted the ages of persecution and oppression. The concentration of their joys in domestic life has kept up in them the capacity of tenderness: the pity for the fatherless and the widow, the care for the women and the little ones, blent intimately with their religion, is a well of mercy that cannot long or widely be pent up by exclusiveness. And the kindliness of the Jew overflows the line of division between him and the Gentile. On the whole, one of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of this scattered people, made for ages "a scorn and a hissing," is, that after being subjected to this process, which might have been expected to be in every sense deteriorating and vitiating, they have come out of it (in any estimate which allows for numerical proportion) rivalling the nations of all European countries in healthiness and beauty of *physique*, in practical ability, in scientific and artistic aptitude, and in some forms of ethical value. A significant indication of their natural rank is seen in the fact that at this moment, the leader of the Liberal party in Germany is a Jew, the leader of the Republican party in France is a Jew, and the head of the Conservative ministry in England is a Jew.

And here it is that we find the ground for the obvious jealousy which is now stimulating the revived expression of old antipathies. "The Jews," it is felt, "have a dangerous tendency to get the uppermost places not only in commerce but in political life. Their monetary hold on governments is tending to perpetuate in leading Jews a spirit of universal alien-

ism (euphemistically called cosmopolitanism), even where the West has given them a full share in civil and political rights. A people with oriental sunlight in their blood, yet capable of being everywhere acclimatized, they have a force and toughness which enables them to carry off the best prizes; and their wealth is likely to put half the seats in Parliament at their disposal."

There is truth in these views of Jewish social and political relations. But it is rather too late for liberal pleaders to urge them in a merely vituperative sense. Do they propose as a remedy for the impending danger of our healthier national influences getting overridden by Jewish predominance, that we should repeal our emancipatory laws? Not all the Germanic immigrants who have been settling among us for generations, and are still pouring in to settle, are Jews, but thoroughly Teutonic and more or less Christian craftsmen, mechanicians, or skilled and erudite functionaries; and the Semitic Christians who swarm among us are dangerously like their unconverted brethren in complexion, persistence, and wealth. Then there are the Greeks who, by the help of Phœnician blood or otherwise, are objectionably strong in the city. Some judges think that the Scotch are more numerous and prosperous here in the South than is quite for the good of us Southerners; and the early inconvenience felt under the Stuarts of being quartered upon by a hungry hard-working people with a distinctive accent and form of religion, and higher cheek-bones than English taste requires, has not yet been quite neutralized. As for the Irish, it is felt in high quarters that we have always been too lenient towards them;—at least, if they had been harried a little more there might not have been so many of them on the English press, of which they divide the power with the Scotch, thus driving many Englishmen to honest and inelegant labor.

So far shall we be carried if we go in search of devices to hinder people of other blood than our own from getting the advantage of dwelling among us.

Let it be admitted that it is a calamity to the English, as to any other great historic people, to undergo a premature fusion with immigrants of alien blood; that its distinctive national characteristics should be in danger of obliteration by the predominating quality of foreign settlers. I not only admit this, I am ready to unite in groaning over the threatened danger. To one who loves his native language, who would delight to keep our rich and harmonious English undefiled by



foreign accent, foreign intonation, and those foreign tinctures of verbal meaning which tend to confuse all writing and discourse, it is an affliction as harassing as the climate, that on our stage, in our studios, at our public and private gatherings, in our offices, warehouses, and workshops, we must expect to hear our beloved English with its words clipped, its vowels stretched and twisted, its phrases of acquiescence and politeness, of cordiality, dissidence or argument, delivered always in the wrong tones, like ill-rendered melodies, marred beyond recognition; that there should be a general ambition to speak every language except our mother English, which persons "of style" are not ashamed of corrupting with slang, false foreign equivalents, and a pronunciation that crushes out all color from the vowels and jams them between jostling consonants. An ancient Greek might not like to be resuscitated for the sake of hearing Homer read in our universities, still he would at least find more instructive marvels in other developments to be witnessed at those institutions; but a modern Englishman is invited from his after-dinner repose to hear Shakespeare delivered under circumstances which offer no other novelty than some novelty of false intonation, some new distribution of strong emphasis on prepositions, some new misconception of a familiar idiom. Well! it is our inertness that is in fault, our carelessness of excellence, our willing ignorance of the treasures that lie in our national heritage, while we are agape after what is foreign, though it may be only a vile imitation of what is native.

This marring of our speech, however, is a minor evil compared with what must follow from the predominance of wealth-acquiring immigrants, whose appreciation of our political and social life must often be as approximative or fatally erroneous as their delivery of our language. But take the worst issues — what can we do to hinder them? Are we to adopt the exclusiveness for which we have punished the Chinese? Are we to tear the glorious flag of hospitality which has made our freedom the world-wide blessing of the oppressed? It is not agreeable to find foreign accents and stumbling locutions passing from the piquant exception to the general rule of discourse. But to urge on that account that we should spike away the peaceful foreigner, would be a view of international relations not in the long-run favorable to the interests of our fellow-countrymen; for we are at least equal to the races we call obtrusive in the disposition to settle wherever money is to be made and cheaply idle living to be

found. In meeting the national evils which are brought upon us by the onward course of the world, there is often no more immediate hope or resource than that of striving after fuller national excellence, which must consist in the moulding of more excellent individual natives. The tendency of things is towards the quicker or slower fusion of races. It is impossible to arrest this tendency: all we can do is to moderate its course so as to hinder it from degrading the moral status of societies by a too rapid effacement of those national traditions and customs which are the language of the national genius — the deep suckers of healthy sentiment. Such moderating and guidance of inevitable movement is worthy of all effort. And it is in this sense that the modern insistence on the idea of Nationalities has value. That any people at once distinct and coherent enough to form a state should be held in subjection by an alien antipathetic government has been becoming more and more a ground of sympathetic indignation; and in virtue of this, at least one great State has been added to European councils. Nobody now complains of the result in this case, though far-sighted persons see the need to limit analogy by discrimination. We have to consider who are the stifled people and who the stiflers before we can be sure of our ground. The only point in this connection on which Englishmen are agreed is, that England itself shall not be subject to foreign rule. The fiery resolve to resist invasion, though with an improvised array of pitchforks, is felt to be virtuous, and to be worthy of a historic people. Why? Because there is a national life in our veins. Because there is something specifically English which we feel to be supremely worth striving for, worth dying for, rather than living to renounce it. Because we too have our share — perhaps a principal share — in that spirit of separateness which has not yet done its work in the education of mankind, which has created the varying genius of nations, and, like the Muses, is the offspring of memory.

Here, as everywhere else, the human task seems to be the discerning and adjustment of opposite claims. But the end can hardly be achieved by urging contradictory reproaches, and instead of laboring after discernment as a preliminary to intervention, letting our zeal burst forth according to a capricious selection, first determined accidentally and afterwards justified by personal predilection. Not only John Gilpin and his wife, or Edwin and Angelina, seem to be of opinion that their preference or dislike of Russians, Servians, or Greeks, consequent, perhaps, on hotel adventures, has something to do

with the merits of the Eastern Question; even in a higher range of intellect and enthusiasm we find a distribution of sympathy or pity for sufferers of different blood or votaries of differing religions, strangely unaccountable on any other ground than a fortuitous direction of study or trivial circumstances of travel. With some even admirable persons, one is never quite sure of any particular being included under a general term. A provincial physician, it is said, once ordering a lady patient not to eat salad, was asked pleadingly by the affectionate husband whether she might eat lettuce, or cresses, or radishes. The physician had too rashly believed in the comprehensiveness of the word "salad," just as we, if not enlightened by experience, might believe in the all-embracing breadth of "sympathy with the injured and oppressed." What mind can exhaust the grounds of exception which lie in each particular case? There is understood to be a peculiar odor from the negro body, and we know that some persons, too rationalistic to feel bound by the curse on Ham, used to hint very strongly that this odor determined the question on the side of negro slavery.

And this is the usual level of thinking in polite society concerning the Jews. Apart from theological purposes, it seems to be held surprising that anybody should take an interest in the history of a people whose literature has furnished all our devotional language; and if any reference is made to their past or future destinies some hearer is sure to state as a relevant fact which may assist our judgment, that she, for her part, is not fond of them, having known a Mr. Jacobson who was very unpleasant, or that he, for his part, thinks meanly of them as a race, though on inquiry you find that he is so little acquainted with their characteristics that he is astonished to learn how many persons whom he has blindly admired and applauded are Jews to the backbone. Again, men who consider themselves in the very van of modern advancement, knowing history and the latest philosophies of history, indicate their contemptuous surprise that any one should entertain the destiny of the Jews as a worthy subject, by referring to Moloch and their own agreement with the theory that the religion of Jehovah was merely a transformed Moloch-worship, while in the same breath they are glorifying "civilization" as a transformed tribal existence of which some lineaments are traceable in grim marriage customs of the native Australians. Are these erudite persons prepared to insist that the name "Father" should no longer have any

sanctity for us, because in their view of likelihood our Aryan ancestors were mere improvers on a state of things in which nobody knew his own father?

For less theoretic men, ambitious to be regarded as practical politicians, the value of the Hebrew race has been measured by their unfavorable opinion of a prime minister who is a Jew by lineage. But it is possible to form a very ugly opinion as to the scrupulousness of Walpole, or of Chatham; and in any case I think Englishmen would refuse to accept the character and doings of those eighteenth century statesmen as the standard of value for the English people and the part they have to play in the fortunes of mankind.

If we are to consider the future of the Jews at all, it seems reasonable to take as a preliminary question: Are they destined to complete fusion with the peoples among whom they are dispersed, losing every remnant of a distinctive consciousness as Jews; or, are there in the breadth and intensity with which the feeling of separateness, or what we may call the organized memory of a national consciousness, actually exists in the world-wide Jewish communities—the seven millions scattered from east to west—and again, are there in the political relations of the world, the conditions present or approaching for the restoration of a Jewish state planted on the old ground as a centre of national feeling, a source of dignifying protection, a special channel for special energies which may contribute some added form of national genius, and an added voice in the councils of the world?

They are among us everywhere: it is useless to say we are not fond of them. Perhaps we are not fond of proletarians and their tendency to form Unions, but the world is not therefore to be rid of them. If we wish to free ourselves from the inconveniences that we have to complain of, whether in proletarians or in Jews, our best course is to encourage all means of improving these neighbors who elbow us in a thickening crowd, and of sending their incommensurable energies into beneficent channels. Why are we so eager for the dignity of certain populations of whom perhaps we have never seen a single specimen, and of whose history, legend, or literature we have been contentedly ignorant for ages, while we sneer at the notion of a renovated national dignity for the Jews, whose ways of thinking and whose very verbal forms are on our lips in every prayer which we end with an Amen? Some of us consider this question dismissed when they have said that the wealthiest Jews have no desire to forsake their European

palaces, and go to live in Jerusalem. But in a return from exile, in the restoration of a people, the question is not whether certain rich men will choose to remain behind, but whether there will be found worthy men who will choose to lead the return. Plenty of prosperous Jews remained in Babylon when Ezra marshalled his band of forty thousand and began a new glorious epoch in the history of his race, making the preparation for that epoch in the history of the world which has been held glorious enough to be dated from forevermore. The hinge of possibility is simply the existence of an adequate community of feeling as well as widespread need in the Jewish race, and the hope that among its finer specimens there may arise some men of instruction and ardent public spirit, some new Ezras, some modern Maccabees, who will know how to use all favoring outward conditions, how to triumph by heroic example over the indifference of their fellows and the scorn of their foes, and will steadfastly set their faces towards making their people once more one among the nations.

Formerly, evangelical orthodoxy was prone to dwell on the fulfilment of prophecy in the "restoration of the Jews." Such interpretation of the prophets is less in vogue now. The dominant mode is to insist on a Christianity that disowns its origin, that is not a substantial growth having a genealogy, but is a vaporous reflex of modern notion. The Christ of Matthew had the heart of a Jew — "Go ye first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The Apostle of the Gentiles had the heart of a Jew: "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." Modern apostles, extolling Christianity, are found using a different tone: they prefer the mediæval cry translated into modern phrase. But the mediæval cry too was in substance very ancient — more ancient than the days of Augustus. Pagans in successive ages said, "These people are unlike us, and refuse to be made like us: let us punish them." The Jews were steadfast in their separateness, and through that separateness Christianity was born. A modern book on Liberty has maintained that from the freedom of individual men to persist in idiosyncrasies the world may be enriched. Why should we not apply this argument to the idiosyncrasy

of a nation, and pause in our haste to hoot it down? There is still a great function for the steadfastness of the Jew: not that he should shut out the utmost illumination which knowledge can throw on his national history, but that he should cherish the store of inheritance which that history has left him. Every Jew should be conscious that he is one of a multitude possessing common objects of piety in the immortal achievements and immortal sorrows of ancestors who have transmitted to them a physical and mental type strong enough, eminent enough in faculties, pregnant enough with peculiar promise, to constitute a new beneficent individuality among the nations, and, by confuting the traditions of scorn, nobly avenge the wrongs done to their Fathers.

There is a sense in which the worthy child of a nation that has brought forth illustrious prophets, high and unique among the poets of the world, is bound by their visions.

Is bound?

Yes, for the effective bound of human action is feeling, and the worthy child of a people owning the triple name of Hebrew, Israelite, and Jew, feels his kinship with the glories and the sorrows, the degradation and the possible renovation of his national family.

Will any one teach the nullification of this feeling and call his doctrine a philosophy? He will teach a blinding superstition — the superstition that a theory of human well-being can be constructed in disregard of the influences which have made us human.

THE END.



ESSAYS  
AND  
LEAVES FROM A NOTE BOOK





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# ESSAYS.

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## WORLDLINESS AND OTHER-WORLDLINESS: THE POET YOUNG.

THE study of men, as they have appeared in different ages, and under various social conditions, may be considered as the natural history of the race. Let us, then, for a moment imagine ourselves, as students of this natural history, "dredging" the first half of the eighteenth century in search of specimens. About the year 1730 we have hauled up a remarkable individual of the species *divine*—a surprising name, considering the nature of the animal before us; but we are used to unsuitable names in natural history. Let us examine this individual at our leisure. He is on the verge of fifty, and has recently undergone his metamorphosis into the clerical form. Rather a paradoxical specimen, if you observe him narrowly: a sort of cross between a sycophant and a psalmist; a poet whose imagination is alternately fired by the "Last Day" and by a creation of peers, who fluctuates between rhapsodic applause of King George and rhapsodic applause of Jehovah. After spending "a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets," after being a hanger-on of the profligate Duke of Wharton, after aiming in vain at a parliamentary career, and angling for pensions and preferment with fulsome dedications and fustian odes, he is a little disgusted with his imperfect success, and has determined to retire from the general mendicancy business to a particular branch; in other words, he has determined on that renunciation of the world implied in "taking orders," with the prospect of a good living and an advantageous matrimonial connection. And he personifies the nicest balance of temporalities and spiritualities. He is equally impressed with the momentousness of death and of burial fees; he languishes at once for immortal life and for "livings;" he has a fervid attachment to patrons in general, but on the whole prefers the Almighty. He will teach, with some-

thing more than official conviction, the nothingness of earthly things; and he will feel something more than private disgust if his meritorious efforts in directing men's attention to another world are not rewarded by substantial preferment in this. His secular man believes in cambric bands and silk stockings as characteristic attire for "an ornament of religion and virtue;" hopes courtiers will never forget to copy Sir Robert Walpole; and writes begging-letters to the King's mistress. His spiritual man recognizes no motives more familiar than Golgotha and "the skies;" it walks in graveyards, or it soars among the stars. His religion exhausts itself in ejaculations and rebukes, and knows no medium between the ecstasies and the sententious. If it were not for the prospect of immortality, he considers, it would be wise and agreeable to be indecent, or to murder one's father; and, heaven apart, it would be extremely irrational in any man not to be a knave. Man, he thinks, is a compound of the angel and the brute: the brute is to be humbled by being reminded of its "relation to the stalls," and frightened into moderation by the contemplation of deathbeds and skulls; the angel is to be developed by vituperating this world and exalting the next; and by this double process you get the Christian—"the highest style of man." With all this, our new-made divine is an unmistakable poet. To a clay compounded chiefly of the worldling and the rhetorician, there is added a real spark of Promethean fire. He will one day clothe his apostrophes and oburgations, his astronomical religion and his charnel-house morality, in lasting verse, which will stand, like a Juggernaut made of gold and jewels, at once magnificent and repulsive: for this divine is Edward Young, the future author of the "Night Thoughts."

Judging from Young's works, one might imagine that the preacher had been organized in him by hereditary transmission through a long line of clerical forefathers,—that the diamonds of the "Night Thoughts" had been slowly condensed from the charcoal of ancestral sermons. Yet it was not so. His grandfather, apparently, wrote himself *gentleman*, not *clerk*; and there is no evidence that preaching had run in the family blood before it took that turn in the person of the poet's father, who was quadruply clerical, being at once rector, prebendary, court chaplain, and dean. Young was born at his father's rectory of Upham, in 1681. In due time the boy went to Winchester College, and subsequently, though not till he was twenty-two, to Oxford, where, for his father's sake, he

was befriended by the wardens of two colleges, and in 1708, three years after his father's death, nominated by Archbishop Tenison to a law fellowship at All Souls. Of Young's life at Oxford in these years, hardly anything is known. His biographer, Croft, has nothing to tell us but the vague report that, when "Young found himself independent and his own master at All Souls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality that he afterwards became," and the perhaps apocryphal anecdote, that Tindal, the atheist, confessed himself embarrassed by the originality of Young's arguments. Both the report and the anecdote, however, are borne out by indirect evidence. As to the latter, Young has left us sufficient proof that he was fond of arguing on the theological side, and that he had his own way of treating old subjects. As to the former, we learn that Pope, after saying other things which we know to be true of Young, added, that he passed "a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets;" and, from all the indications we possess of his career till he was nearly fifty we are inclined to think that Pope's statement only errs by defect, and that he should rather have said, "a foolish youth and *middle age*." It is not likely that Young was a very hard student, for he impressed Johnson, who saw him in his old age, as "not a great scholar," and as surprisingly ignorant of what Johnson thought "quite common maxims" in literature; and there is no evidence that he filled either his leisure or his purse by taking pupils. His career as an author did not begin till he was nearly thirty, even dating from the publication of a portion of the "Last Day," in the *Tatler*; so that he could hardly have been absorbed in composition. But where the fully developed insect is parasitic, we believe the larva is usually parasitic also, and we shall probably not be far wrong in supposing that Young at Oxford, as elsewhere, spent a good deal of his time in hanging about possible and actual patrons, and accommodating himself to their habits with considerable flexibility of conscience and of tongue; being none the less ready, upon occasion, to present himself as the champion of theology, and to rhapsodize at convenient moments in the company of the skies or of skulls. That brilliant profligate, the Duke of Wharton, to whom Young afterwards clung as his chief patron, was at this time a mere boy; and, though it is probable that their intimacy had already begun, since the Duke's father and mother were friends of the old Dean, that intimacy ought not to aggravate any unfavorable inference as to Young's Oxford life. It is less likely that he fell into any exceptional

vice, than that he differed from the men around him chiefly in his episodes of theological advocacy and rhapsodic solemnity. He probably sowed his wild oats after the coarse fashion of his times, for he has left us sufficient evidence that his moral sense was not delicate; but his companions, who were occupied in sowing their own oats, perhaps took it as a matter of course that he should be a rake, and were only struck with the exceptional circumstance that he was a pious and moralizing rake.

There is some irony in the fact that the two first poetical productions of Young, published in the same year, were his "Epistle to Lord Lansdowne," celebrating the recent creation of peers — Lord Lansdowne's creation in particular; and the "Last Day." Other poets, besides Young, found the device for obtaining a Tory majority by turning twelve insignificant commoners into insignificant lords, an irresistible stimulus to verse; but no other poet showed so versatile an enthusiasm — so nearly equal an ardor for the honor of the new baron and the honor of the Deity. But the twofold nature of the sycophant and the psalmist is not more strikingly shown in the contrasted themes of the two poems, than in the transitions from bombast about monarchs, to bombast about the resurrection, in the "Last Day" itself. The dedication of this poem to Queen Anne, Young afterwards suppressed, for he was always ashamed of having flattered a dead patron. In this dedication, Croft tells us, "he gives her Majesty praise indeed for her victories, but says that the author is more pleased to see her rise from this lower world, soaring above the clouds, passing the first and second heavens, and leaving the fixed stars behind her; nor will he lose her there, he says, but keep her still in view through the boundless spaces on the other side of creation, in her journey towards eternal bliss, till he behold the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her still onward from the stretch of his imagination, which tires in her pursuit, and falls back again to earth."

The self-criticism which prompted the suppression of the dedication, did not, however, lead him to improve either the rhyme or the reason of the unfortunate couplet, —

"When other Bourbons reign in other lands,  
And, if men's sins forbid not, other Annes."

In the "Epistle to Lord Lansdowne," Young indicates his taste for the drama; and there is evidence that his tragedy

of "Busiris" was "in the theatre" as early as this very year, 1713, though it was not brought on the stage till nearly six years later; so that Young was now very decidedly bent on authorship, for which his degree of B.C.L., taken in this year, was doubtless a magical equipment. Another poem, "The Force of Religion; or, Vanquished Love," founded on the execution of Lady Jane Grey and her husband, quickly followed, showing fertility in feeble and tasteless verse; and on the Queen's death, in 1714, Young lost no time in making a poetical lament for a departed patron a vehicle for extravagant laudation of the new monarch. No further literary production of his appeared until 1716, when a Latin oration which he delivered on the foundation of the Codrington Library at All Souls, gave him a new opportunity for displaying his alacrity in inflated panegyric.

In 1717 it is probable that Young accompanied the Duke of Wharton to Ireland, though so slender are the materials for his biography, that the chief basis for this supposition is a passage in his "Conjectures on Original Composition," written when he was nearly eighty, in which he intimates that he had once been in that country. But there are many facts surviving to indicate that for the next eight or nine years Young was a sort of *attaché* of Wharton's. In 1719, according to legal records, the Duke granted him an annuity, in consideration of his having relinquished the office of tutor to Lord Burleigh, with a life annuity of £100 a year, on his Grace's assurances that he would provide for him in a much more ample manner. And again, from the same evidence, it appears that in 1721 Young received from Wharton a bond for £600, in compensation of expenses incurred in standing for Parliament at the Duke's desire, and as an earnest of greater services which his Grace had promised him on his refraining from the spiritual and temporal advantages of taking orders with a certainty of two livings in the gift of his college. It is clear, therefore, that lay advancement, as long as there was any chance of it, had more attractions for Young than clerical preferment; and that at this time he accepted the Duke of Wharton as the pilot of his career.

A more creditable relation of Young's was his friendship with Tickell, with whom he was in the habit of interchanging criticisms, and to whom in 1719 — the same year, let us note, in which he took his doctor's degree — he addressed his "Lines on the Death of Addison." Close upon these followed his "Paraphrase of Part of the Book of Job," with



a dedication to Parker, recently made Lord Chancellor, showing that the possession of Wharton's patronage did not prevent Young from fishing in other waters. He knew nothing of Parker, but that did not prevent him from magnifying the new Chancellor's merits; on the other hand, he *did* know Wharton, but this again did not prevent him from prefixing to his tragedy, "The Revenge," which appeared in 1721, a dedication attributing to the Duke all virtues, as well as all accomplishments. In the concluding sentence of this dedication, Young naïvely indicates that a considerable ingredient in his gratitude was a lively sense of anticipated favors. "My present fortune is his bounty, and my future his care; which I will venture to say will always be remembered to his honor; since he, I know, intended his generosity as an encouragement to merit, though, through his very pardonable partiality to one who bears him so sincere a duty and respect, I happen to receive the benefit of it." Young was economical with his ideas and images; he was rarely satisfied with using a clever thing once, and this bit of ingenious humility was afterwards made to do duty in the "Installation," a poem addressed to Walpole:—

"Be this thy partial smile, from censure free,  
'T was meant for merit, though it fell on me."

It was probably "The Revenge" that Young was writing when, as we learn from Spenser's "Anecdotes," the Duke of Wharton gave him a skull with a candle fixed in it, as the most appropriate lamp by which to write tragedy. According to Young's dedication, the Duke was "accessory" to the scenes of this tragedy in a more important way, "not only by suggesting the most beautiful incident in them, but by making all possible provision for the success of the whole." A statement which is credible, not indeed on the ground of Young's dedicatory assertion, but from the known ability of the Duke, who, as Pope tells us, possessed

"Each gift of Nature and of Art,  
And wanted nothing but an honest heart."

The year 1722 seems to have been the period of a visit to Mr. Dodington, at Eastbury, in Dorsetshire — the "pure Dorsetian downs" celebrated by Thomson, — in which Young made the acquaintance of Voltaire; for in the subsequent dedication of his "Sea Piece" to "Mr. Voltaire," he recalls their

meeting on Dorset Down; and it was in this year that Christopher Pitt, a gentleman-poet of those days, addressed an "Epistle to Dr. Edward Young, at Eastbury, in Dorsetshire," which has at least the merit of this biographical couplet, —

"While with your Dodington retired you sit,  
Charm'd with his flowing Burgundy and wit."

Dodington, apparently, was charmed in his turn, for he told Dr. Warton that Young was "far superior to the French poet in the variety and novelty of his *bonmots* and repartees." Unfortunately, the only specimen of Young's wit on this occasion that has been preserved to us is the epigram represented as an extempore retort (spoken aside, surely) to Voltaire's criticism of Milton's episode of Sin and Death:—

"Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,  
At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin;"—

an epigram which, in the absence of "flowing Burgundy," does not strike us as remarkably brilliant. Let us give Young the benefit of the doubt thrown on the genuineness of this epigram by his own poetical dedication, in which he represents himself as having "soothed" Voltaire's "rage" against Milton "with gentle rhymes;" though in other respects that dedication is anything but favorable to a high estimate of Young's wit. Other evidence apart, we should not be eager for the after-dinner conversation of the man who wrote, —

"Thine is the Drama, how renown'd!  
Thine Epic's loftier trump to sound;—  
*But let Arion's sea-strung harp be mine:*  
*But where's his dolphin? Know'st thou where?*  
*May that be found in thee, Voltaire!*"

The "Satires" appeared in 1725 and 1726, each, of course, with its laudatory dedication and its compliments insinuated amongst the rhymes. The seventh and last is dedicated to Sir Robert Walpole, is very short, and contains nothing in particular except lunatic flattery of George I. and his prime minister, attributing that monarch's late escape from a storm at sea to the miraculous influence of his grand and virtuous soul — for George, he says, rivals the angels:—

"George, who in foes can soft affections raise,  
And charm envenomed satire into praise,  
Nor human rage alone his pow'r perceives,  
But the mad winds and the tumultuous waves.

## 10 WORLDLINESS AND OTHER-WORLDLINESS:

Ev'n storms (Death's fiercest ministers!) forbear,  
And in their own wild empire learn to spare.  
Thus, Nature's self, supporting Man's decree,  
Styles Britain's sovereign, sovereign of the sea."

As for Walpole, what *he* felt at this tremendous crisis —

"No powers of language, but his own, can tell, —  
His own, which Nature and the Graces form,  
At will, to raise, or hush, the civil storm."

It is a coincidence worth noticing, that this seventh Satire was published in 1726, and that the warrant of George I., granting Young a pension of £200 a year from Lady-day 1725, is dated May 3, 1726. The gratitude exhibited in this Satire may have been chiefly prospective, but the "Instalment" — a poem inspired by the thrilling event of Walpole's installation as Knight of the Garter — was clearly written with the double ardor of a man who has got a pension, and hopes for something more. His emotion about Walpole is precisely at the same pitch as his subsequent emotion about the Second Advent. In the "Instalment" he says: —

"With invocations some their hearts inflame;  
*I need no muse, a Walpole is my theme.*"

And of God coming to judgment, he says, in the "Night Thoughts:" —

"I find my inspiration in my theme;  
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Nothing can be feebler than this "Instalment," except in the strength of impudence with which the writer professes to scorn the prostitution of fair fame, the "profanation of celestial fire."

Herbert Croft tells us that Young made more than three thousand pounds by his "Satires," — a surprising statement, taken in connection with the reasonable doubt he throws on the story related in Spence's "Anecdotes," that the Duke of Wharton gave Young £2,000 for this work. Young, however, seems to have been tolerably fortunate in the pecuniary results of his publications; and with his literary profits, his annuity from Wharton, his fellowship, and his pension, not to mention other bounties which may be inferred from the high merits he discovers in many men of wealth and position, we may fairly

suppose that he now laid the foundation of the considerable fortune he left at his death.

It is probable that the Duke of Wharton's final departure for the Continent and disgrace at Court in 1726, and the consequent cessation of Young's reliance on his patronage, tended not only to heighten the temperature of his poetical enthusiasm for Sir Robert Walpole, but also to turn his thoughts towards the Church again, as the second-best means of rising in the world. On the accession of George II., Young found the same transcendent merits in him as in his predecessor, and celebrated them in a style of poetry previously unattempted by him—the Pindaric ode, a poetic form which helped him to surpass himself in furious bombast. "Ocean, an Ode: concluding with a Wish," was the title of this piece. He afterwards pruned it, and cut off, amongst other things, the concluding Wish, expressing the yearning for humble retirement, which, of course, had prompted him to the effusion; but we may judge of the rejected stanzas by the quality of those he has allowed to remain. For example, calling on Britain's dead mariners to rise and meet their "country's full-blown glory" in the person of the new King, he says:—

"What powerful charm  
Can Death disarm?  
Your long, your iron slumbers break?  
*By Jove, by Fame,*  
*By George's name*  
Awake! awake! awake! awake!"

Soon after this notable production, which was written with the ripe folly of forty-seven, Young took orders, and was presently appointed chaplain to the King. "The Brothers," his third and last tragedy, which was already in rehearsal, he now withdrew from the stage, and sought reputation in a way more accordant with the decorum of his new profession, by turning prose-writer. But after publishing "A True Estimate of Human Life," with a dedication to the Queen, as one of the "most shining representatives" of God on earth, and a sermon, entitled "An Apology for Princes; or, the Reverence due to Government," preached before the House of Commons, his Pindaric ambition again seized him, and he matched his former ode by another, called "Imperium Pelagi; a Naval Lyric, written in Imitation of Pindar's spirit, occasioned by his Majesty's Return from Hanover, 1729, and the succeeding Peace." Since he afterwards suppressed this second ode, we

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must suppose that it was rather worse than the first. Next came his two "Epistles to Pope, concerning the Authors of the Age," remarkable for nothing but the audacity of affectation with which the most servile of poets professes to despise servility.

In 1730, Young was presented by his college with the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire; and in the following year, when he was just fifty, he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, a widow with two children, who seems to have been in favor with Queen Caroline, and who probably had an income — two attractions which doubtless enhanced the power of her other charms. Pastoral duties and domesticity probably cured Young of some bad habits; but, unhappily, they did not cure him either of flattery or of fustian. Three more odes followed, quite as bad as those of his bachelorhood, except that in the third he announced the wise resolution of never writing another. It must have been about this time, since Young was now "turned of fifty," that he wrote the letter to Mrs. Howard (afterwards Lady Suffolk), George II.'s mistress, which proves that he used other engines, besides the Pindaric, in "besieging Court favor." The letter is too characteristic to be omitted: —

*"Monday Morning.*

"MADAM, — I know his majesty's goodness to his servants, and his love of justice in general, so well, that I am confident, if his majesty knew my case, I should not have any cause to despair of his gracious favor to me.

"Abilities.  
Good Manners.  
Service.  
Age.

Want,	} for his majesty.
Sufferings	
and	
Zeal	

*These, madam, are the proper points of consideration in the person that humbly hopes his majesty's favor.*

"As to *Abilities*, all I can presume to say is, I have done the best I could to improve them.

"As to *Good Manners*, I desire no favor, if any just objection lies against them,

"As for *Service*, I have been near seven years in his majesty's, and never omitted any duty in it, which few can say.

"As for *Age*, I am turned of fifty.

"As for *Want*, I have no manner of preferment.

"As for *Sufferings*, I have lost £300 per ann. by being in his majesty's service; as I have shown in a *Representation* which his majesty has been so good as to read and consider.

"As for *Zeal*, I have written nothing without showing my duty to their majesties, and some pieces are dedicated to them.

"This, madam, is the short and true state of my case. They that make their court to the ministers, and not their majesties, succeed better. If my case deserves some consideration, and you can serve me in it, I humbly hope and believe you will: I shall, therefore, trouble you no farther; but beg leave to subscribe myself, with truest respect and gratitude, yours, &c.  
EDWARD YOUNG.

"P.S. — I have some hope that my Lord Townshend is my friend; if therefore soon, and before he leaves the court, you had an opportunity of mentioning me, with that favor you have been so good to show, I think it would not fail of success; and, if not, I shall owe you more than any." — *Suffolk Letters*, vol. i. p. 285.

Young's wife died in 1741, leaving him one son, born in 1733. That he had attached himself strongly to her two daughters by her former marriage, there is better evidence in the report, mentioned by Mrs. Montagu, of his practical kindness and liberality to the younger, than in his lamentations over the elder as the "Narcissa" of the "Night Thoughts." "Narcissa" had died in 1735, shortly after marriage to Mr. Temple, the son of Lord Palmerston; and Mr. Temple himself, after a second marriage, died in 1740, a year before Lady Elizabeth Young. These, then, are the three deaths supposed to have inspired "The Complaint," which forms the three first books of the "Night Thoughts": —

"Insatiate archer, could not one suffice?  
Thy shaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was slain;  
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn,"

Since we find Young departing from the truth of dates, in order to heighten the effect of his calamity, or at least of his climax, we need not be surprised that he allowed his imagination great freedom in other matters besides chronology, and that the character of "Philander" can, by no process, be made to fit Mr. Temple. The supposition that the much-lectured "Lorenzo" of the "Night Thoughts" was Young's own son, is hardly rendered more absurd by the fact that the poem was written when that son was a boy, than by the obvious artificiality of the characters Young introduces as targets for his arguments and rebukes. Among all the trivial efforts of conjectural criticism, there can hardly be one more futile than the attempt to discover the original of those pitiable lay-figures, the "Lorenzos" and "Altamonts" of Young's didactic prose and poetry. His muse never stood face to face with a genuine, living human being; she would have been as much startled by such an encounter as a stage necromancer whose incantations and blue fire had actually conjured up a demon.



## 14 WORLDLINESS AND OTHER-WORLDLINESS:

The "Night Thoughts" appeared between 1741 and 1745. Although he declares in them that he has chosen God for his "patron" henceforth, this is not at all to the prejudice of some half-dozen lords, duchesses, and right honorables, who have the privilege of sharing finely turned compliments with their co-patron. The line which closed the Second Night in the earlier editions —

"Wits spare not Heaven, O Wilmington! — nor thee" —

is an intense specimen of that perilous juxtaposition of ideas by which Young, in his incessant search after point and novelty, unconsciously converts his compliments into sarcasms; and his apostrophe to the moon as more likely to be favorable to his song if he calls her "fair Portland of the skies," is worthy even of his Pindaric ravings. His ostentatious renunciation of worldly schemes, and especially of his twenty-years' siege of Court favor, are in the tone of one who retains some hope, in the midst of his querulousness.

He descended from the astronomical rhapsodies of his Ninth Night, published in 1745, to more terrestrial strains in his "Reflections on the Public Situation of the Kingdom," dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle; but in this critical year we get a glimpse of him through a more prosaic and less refracting medium. He spent a part of the year at Tunbridge Wells; and Mrs. Montagu, who was there too, gives a very lively picture of the "divine Doctor" in her letters to the Duchess of Portland, on whom Young had bestowed the superlative bombast to which we have just referred. We shall borrow the quotations from Dr. Doran, in spite of their length, because, to our mind, they present the most agreeable portrait we possess of Young: —

"I have great joy in Dr. Young, whom I disturbed in a reverie. At first he started, then bowed, then fell back into a surprise; then began a speech, relapsed into his astonishment two or three times, forgot what he had been saying; began a new subject, and so went on. I told him your grace desired he would write longer letters; to which he cried "Ha!" most emphatically, and I leave you to interpret what it meant. He has made a friendship with one person here, whom I believe you would not imagine to have been made for his bosom friend. You would, perhaps, suppose it was a bishop or dean, a prebend, a pious preacher, a clergyman of exemplary life, or, if a layman, of most virtuous conversation, one that had paraphrased St. Matthew, or wrote comments on St. Paul. . . . You would not guess that this associate of the doctor's was — old Cibber! Certainly, in their religious, moral, and civil character, there is no relation; but in their dramatic capacity there is some." — Mrs. Montagu was not aware that Cibber, whom Young had named not disparagingly in his

Satires, was the brother of his old schoolfellow; but to return to our hero. 'The waters,' says Mrs. Montagu, 'have raised his spirits to a fine pitch, as your grace will imagine, when I tell you how sublime an answer he made to a very vulgar question. I asked him how long he stayed at the Wells; he said, As long as my rival stayed;—as long as the sun did.' Among the visitors at the Wells were Lady Sunderland (wife of Sir Robert Sutton) and her sister, Mrs. Tichborne. 'He did an admirable thing to Lady Sunderland: on her mentioning Sir Robert Sutton, he asked her where Sir Robert's lady was; on which we all laughed very heartily, and I brought him off, half ashamed, to my lodgings, where, during breakfast, he assured me he had asked after Lady Sunderland, because he had a great honor for her; and that, having a respect for her sister, he designed to have inquired after her, if we had not put it out of his head by laughing at him. You must know, Mrs. Tichborne sat next to Lady Sunderland. It would have been admirable to have had him finish his compliment in that manner.' . . . 'His expressions all bear the stamp of novelty, and his thoughts of sterling sense. He practises a kind of philosophical abstinence. . . . He carried Mrs. Rolt and myself to Tunbridge, five miles from hence, where we were to see some fine old ruins. . . . First rode the doctor on a tall steed, decently caparisoned in dark gray; next, ambled Mrs. Rolt on a hackney horse; . . . then followed your humble servant on a milk-white palfrey. I rode on in safety, and at leisure to observe the company, especially the two figures that brought up the rear. The first was my servant, valiantly armed with two uncharged pistols; the last was the doctor's man, whose uncombed hair so resembled the mane of the horse he rode, one could not help imagining they were of kin, and wishing, for the honor of the family, that they had had one comb betwixt them. On his head was a velvet cap, much resembling a black saucepan, and on his side hung a little basket.—At last we arrived at the King's Head, where the loyalty of the doctor induced him to alight; and then, knight-errant-like, he took his damselfs from off their palfreys, and courteously handed us into the inn.' . . . The party returned to the Wells; and 'the silver Cynthia held up her lamp in the heavens' the while. 'The night silenced all but our divine doctor, who sometimes uttered things fit to be spoken in a season when all nature seems to be hushed and hearkening. I followed, gathering wisdom as I went, till I found, by my horse's stumbling, that I was in a bad road, and that the blind was leading the blind. So I placed my servant between the doctor and myself; which he not perceiving, went on in a most philosophical strain, to the great admiration of my poor clown of a servant, who, not being wrought up to any pitch of enthusiasm, nor making any answer to all the fine things he heard, the doctor, wondering I was dumb, and grieving I was so stupid, looked round and declared his surprise.' "

Young's oddity and absence of mind are gathered from other sources besides these stories of Mrs. Montagu's, and gave rise to the report that he was the original of Fielding's "Parson Adams;" but this Croft denies, and mentions another Young, who really sat for the portrait, and who, we imagine, had both more Greek and more genuine simplicity than the poet. His love of chatting with Colley Cibber was an indication that the old predilection for the stage survived, in spite of his emphatic contempt for "all joys but joys that never can

expire;" and the production of "The Brothers" at Drury Lane in 1753, after a suppression of fifteen years, was perhaps not entirely due to the expressed desire to give the proceeds to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The author's profits were not more than £400 — in those days a disappointing sum; and Young, as we learn from his friend Richardson, did not make this the limit of his donation, but gave a thousand guineas to the Society. "I had some talk with him," says Richardson, in one of his letters, "about this great action. 'I always,' said he, 'intended to do something handsome for the Society. Had I deferred it to my demise, I should have given away my son's money. All the world are inclined to pleasure; could I have given myself a greater by disposing of the sum to a different use, I should have done it.'"

His next work was "The Centaur not Fabulous; in Six Letters to a Friend, on the Life in Vogue," which reads very much like the most oburgatory parts of the "Night Thoughts" reduced to prose. It is preceded by a preface which, though addressed to a lady, is in its denunciations of vice as grossly indecent and almost as flippant as the epilogues written by "friends," which he allowed to be reprinted after his tragedies in the latest edition of his works. We like much better than "The Centaur," "Conjectures on Original Composition," written in 1759, for the sake, he says, of communicating to the world the well-known anecdote about Addison's deathbed, and, with the exception of his poem on Resignation, the last thing he ever published.

The estrangement from his son, which must have embittered the later years of his life, appears to have begun not many years after the mother's death. On the marriage of her second daughter, who had previously presided over Young's household, a Mrs. Hallows, understood to be a woman of disreputable age, and the daughter (or widow) of a clergyman who was an old friend of Young's, became housekeeper at Welwyn. Opinions about ladies are apt to differ. "Mrs. Hallows was a woman of piety, improved by reading," says one witness. "She was a very coarse woman," says Dr. Johnson; and we shall presently find some indirect evidence that her temper was perhaps not quite so much improved as her piety. Servants, it seems, were not fond of remaining long in the house with her; a satirical curate, named Kidgell, hints at "drops of juniper" taken as a cordial (but perhaps he was spiteful, and a teetotaler); and Young's son is said to have told his

father that "an old man should not resign himself to the management of anybody." The result was, that the son was banished from home for the rest of his father's lifetime, though Young seems never to have thought of disinheriting him.

Our latest glimpses of the aged poet are derived from certain letters of Mr. Jones, his curate — letters preserved in the British Museum, and, happily, made accessible to common mortals in Nichols's 'Anecdotes.' Mr. Jones was a man of some literary activity and ambition, — a collector of interesting documents, and one of those concerned in the "Free and Candid Disquisitions," the design of which was "to point out such things in our ecclesiastical establishment as want to be reviewed and amended." On these and kindred subjects he corresponded with Dr. Birch, occasionally troubling him with queries and manuscripts. We have a respect for Mr. Jones. Unlike most persons who trouble others with queries or manuscripts, he mitigates the infliction by such gifts as "a fat pullet," wishing he "had anything better to send; but this depauperizing vicarage (of Alconbury) too often checks the freedom and forwardness of my mind." Another day comes a "pound canister of tea;" another, a "young fatted goose." Mr. Jones's first letter from Welwyn is dated June 1759, not quite six years before Young's death. In June 1762, he expresses a wish to go to London "this summer. But," he continues, —

"My time and pains are almost continually taken up here, and . . . I have been (I now find) a considerable loser, upon the whole, by continuing here so long. The consideration of this, and the inconveniences I sustained, and do still experience from my late illness, obliged me at last to acquaint the Doctor (Young) with my case, and to assure him that I plainly perceived the duty and confinement here to be too much for me; for which reason I must (I said) beg to be at liberty to resign my charge at Michaelmas. I began to give him these notices in February, when I was very ill: and now I perceive, by what he told me the other day, that he is in some difficulty: for which reason he is at last (he says) resolved to advertise, and even (*which is much wondered at*) to raise the salary considerably higher. (What he allowed my predecessors was £20 per annum; and now he proposes £50, as he tells me.) I never asked him to raise it for me, though I well knew it was not equal to the duty; nor did I say a word about myself when he lately suggested to me his intentions upon this subject."

In a postscript to this letter he says: —

"I may mention to you farther, as a friend that may be trusted, that, in all likelihood, the poor old gentleman will not find it a very easy

matter, unless by dint of money, and force upon himself, to procure a man that he can like for his next curate, nor one that will stay with him so long as I have done. Then, his great age will recur to people's thoughts; and if he has any foibles, either in temper or conduct, they will be sure not to be forgotten on this occasion by those who know him; and those who do not will probably be on their guard. On these and the like considerations, it is by no means an eligible office to be seeking out for a curate for him, as he has several times wished me to do; and would, if he knew that I am now writing to you, wish your assistance also. But my best friends here, *who well foresees the probable consequences*, and wish me well, earnestly dissuade me from complying; and I will decline the office with as much decency as I can: but high salary will, I suppose, fetch in somebody or other, soon."

In the following July, he writes:—

"The old gentleman here (I may venture to tell you freely) seems to me to be in a pretty odd way of late, —moping, dejected, self-willed, and as if surrounded with some perplexing circumstances. Though I visit him pretty frequently for short intervals, I say very little to his affairs, not choosing to be a party concerned, especially in cases of so critical and tender a nature. There is much mystery in almost all his temporal affairs, as well as in many of his speculative theories. Whoever lives in this neighborhood to see his exit, will probably see and hear some very strange things. Time will show;—I am afraid, not greatly to his credit. There is thought to be an *irremovable obstruction to his happiness within his walls, as well as another without them*; but the former is the more powerful, and like to continue so. He has this day been trying anew to engage me to stay with him. No lucrative views can tempt me to sacrifice my liberty or my health, to such measures as are proposed here. *Nor do I like to have to do with persons whose word and honor cannot be depended on.* So much for this very odd and unhappy topic."

In August, Mr. Jones's tone is slightly modified. Earnest entreaties, not lucrative considerations, have induced him to cheer the Doctor's dejected heart by remaining at Welwyn some time longer. The Doctor is, "in various respects, a very unhappy man," and few know so much of these "respects" as Mr. Jones. In September, he recurs to the subject:—

"My ancient gentleman here is still full of trouble: which moves my concern, though it moves only the secret laughter of many, and some untoward surmises in disfavor of him and his household. The loss of a very large sum of money (about £200) is talked of; whereof this vill and neighborhood is full. Some disbelieve; others say, '*It is no wonder, where about eighteen or more servants are sometimes taken and dismissed in the course of a year.*' The gentleman himself is allowed by all to be far more harmless and easy in his family than some one else who hath too much the lead in it. This, among others, was one reason for my late motion to quit."

No other mention of Young's affairs occurs until April 2, 1765, when he says that Dr. Young is very ill, attended by two physicians.

"Having mentioned this young gentleman (Dr. Young's son), I would acquaint you next, that he came hither this morning, having been sent for, as I am told, by the direction of Mrs. Hallows. Indeed, she intimated to me as much herself. And if this be so, I must say that it is one of the most prudent acts she ever did, or could have done in such a case as this; as it may prove a means of preventing much confusion after the death of the Doctor. I have had some little discourse with the son: he seems much affected, and I believe really is so. He earnestly wishes his father might be pleased to ask after him; for you must know he has not yet done this, nor is, in my opinion, like to do it. And it has been said farther, that upon a late application made to him on the behalf of his son, he desired that no more might be said to him about it. How true this may be, I cannot as yet be certain; all I shall say is, it seems not improbable. . . . I heartily wish the ancient man's heart may prove tender towards his son; *though, knowing him so well, I can scarce hope to hear such desirable news.*

Eleven days later, he writes: —

"I have now the pleasure to acquaint you, that the late Dr. Young, though he had for many years kept his son at a distance from him, yet has now at last left him all his possessions, after the payment of certain legacies; so that the young gentleman (who bears a fair character, and behaves well, as far as I can hear or see) will, I hope, soon enjoy and make a prudent use of a handsome fortune. The father, on his deathbed, and since my return from London, was applied to in the tenderest manner, by one of his physicians, and by another person, to admit the son into his presence, to make submission, entreat forgiveness, and obtain his blessing. As to an interview with his son, he intimated that he chose to decline it, as his spirits were then low, and his nerves weak. With regard to the next particular, he said, '*I heartily forgive him;*' and upon mention of this last, he gently lifted up his hand, and letting it gently fall, pronounced these words, '*God bless him!*' . . . I know it will give you pleasure to be farther informed, that he was pleased to make respectful mention of me in his will; expressing his satisfaction in my care of his parish, *bequeathing to me a handsome legacy*, and appointing me to be one of his executors."

So far Mr. Jones, in his confidential correspondence with a "friend who may be trusted." In a letter communicated apparently by him to the "Gentleman's Magazine" seventeen years later — namely, in 1782 — on the appearance of Croft's biography of Young, we find him speaking of "the ancient gentleman" in a tone of reverential eulogy, quite at variance with the free comments we have just quoted. But the Rev. John Jones was probably of opinion, with Mrs. Montagu, whose contemporary and retrospective letters are also set in a

different key, that "the interests of religion were connected with the character of a man so distinguished for piety as Dr. Young." At all events, a subsequent *quasi* official statement weighs nothing as evidence against contemporary, spontaneous, and confidential hints.

To Mrs. Hallows, Young left a legacy of £1,000, with the request that she would destroy all his manuscripts. This final request, from some unknown cause, was not complied with, and among the papers he left behind him was the following letter from Archbishop Secker, which probably marks the date of his latest effort after preferment:—

"DEANERY OF ST. PAUL'S, July 8, 1758.

"GOOD DR. YOUNG,—I have long wondered that more suitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by persons in power. But how to remedy the omission I see not. No encouragement hath ever been given me to mention things of this nature to his Majesty. And therefore, in all likelihood, the only consequence of doing it would be *weakening the little influence which else I may possibly have on some other occasions. Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement; and your sentiments above that concern for it on your own account*, which, on that of the public, is sincerely felt by

"Your loving Brother,

"THO. CANT."

The loving brother's irony is severe!

Perhaps the least questionable testimony to the better side of Young's character is that of Bishop Hildesley, who, as the vicar of a parish near Welwyn, had been Young's neighbor for upwards of twenty years. The affection of the clergy for each other, we have observed, is, like that of the fair sex, not at all of a blind and infatuated kind; and we may therefore the rather believe them when they give each other any extra-official praise. Bishop Hildesley, then, writing of Young to Richardson, says:—

"The impertinence of my frequent visits to him was amply rewarded; forasmuch as, I can truly say, he never received me but with agreeable open complacency; and I never left him but with profitable pleasure and improvement. He was one or other, the most modest, the most patient of contradiction, and the most informing and entertaining I ever conversed with—at least, of any man who had so just pretensions to pertinacity and reserve."

Mr. Langton, however, who was also a frequent visitor of Young's, informed Boswell—

"That there was an air of benevolence in his manner; but that he could obtain from him less information than he had hoped to receive

from one who had lived so much in intercourse with the brightest men of what had been called the Augustan age of England ; and that he showed a degree of eager curiosity concerning the common occurrences that were then passing, which appeared somewhat remarkable in a man of such intellectual stores, of such an advanced age, and who had retired from life with declared disappointment in his expectations."

The same substance, we know, will exhibit different qualities under different tests ; and, after all, imperfect reports of individual impressions, whether immediate or traditional, are a very frail basis on which to build our opinion of a man. One's character may be very indifferently mirrored in the mind of the most intimate neighbor ; it all depends on the quality of that gentleman's reflecting surface.

But, discarding any inferences from such uncertain evidence, the outline of Young's character is too distinctly traceable in the well-attested facts of his life, and yet more in the self-betrayal that runs through all his works, for us to fear that our general estimate of him may be false. For, while no poet seems less easy and spontaneous than Young, no poet discloses himself more completely. Men's minds have no hiding-place out of themselves—their affectations do but betray another phase of their nature. And if, in the present view of Young, we seem to be more intent on laying bare unfavorable facts than on shrouding them in charitable speeches, it is not because we have any irreverential pleasure in turning men's characters the seamy side without, but because we see no great advantage in considering a man as he was *not*. Young's biographers and critics have usually set out from the position that he was a great religious teacher, and that his poetry is morally sublime ; and they have toned down his failings into harmony with their conception of the divine and the poet. For our own part, we set out from precisely the opposite conviction—namely, that the religious and moral spirit of Young's poetry is low and false ; and we think it of some importance to show that the "Night Thoughts" are the reflex of a mind in which the higher human sympathies were inactive. This judgment is entirely opposed to our youthful predilections and enthusiasm. The sweet garden-breath of early enjoyment lingers about many a page of the "Night Thoughts," and even of the "Last Day," giving an extrinsic charm to passages of stilted rhetoric and false sentiment ; but the sober and repeated reading of maturer years has convinced us that it would hardly be possible to find a more typical instance than Young's poetry, of the mistake which



substitutes interested obedience for sympathetic emotion, and baptizes egoism as religion.

Pope said of Young, that he had "much of a sublime genius without common-sense." The deficiency Pope meant to indicate was, we imagine, moral rather than intellectual: it was the want of that fine sense of what is fitting in speech and action, which is often eminently possessed by men and women whose intellect is of a very common order, but who have the sincerity and dignity which can never coexist with the selfish preoccupations of vanity or interest. This was the "common-sense" in which Young was conspicuously deficient; and it was partly owing to this deficiency that his genius, waiting to be determined by the highest prizes, fluttered uncertainly from effort to effort, until, when he was more than sixty, it suddenly spread its broad wing, and soared so as to arrest the gaze of other generations besides his own. For he had no versatility of faculty to mislead him. The "Night Thoughts" only differ from his previous works in the degree and not in the kind of power they manifest. Whether he writes prose or poetry, rhyme or blank verse, dramas, satires, odes, or meditations, we see everywhere the same Young—the same narrow circle of thoughts, the same love of abstractions, the same telescopic view of human things, the same appetency towards antithetic apothegm and rhapsodic climax. The passages that arrest us in his tragedies are those in which he anticipates some fine passage in the "Night Thoughts," and where his characters are only transparent shadows through which we see the bewigged *embonpoint* of the didactic poet, excogitating epigrams or ecstatic soliloquies by the light of a candle fixed in a skull. Thus, in "The Revenge," Alonzo, in the conflict of jealousy and love that at once urges and forbids him to murder his wife, says:—

"This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,  
Those skies, through which it rolls, must all have end.  
What then is man? The smallest part of nothing.  
Day burles day; month, month; and year the year!  
Our life is but a chain of many deaths.  
Can then Death's self be feared? Our life much rather:  
*Life is the desert, life the solitude;*  
Death joins us to the great majority:  
'Tis to be born to Plato and to Cæsar;  
'Tis to be great forever;  
'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition, then, to die."

His prose writings all read like the "Night Thoughts,"

either diluted into prose, or not yet orystallized into poetry. For example, in his "Thoughts for Age," he says : —

"Though we stand on its awful brink, such our leaden bias to the world, we turn our faces the wrong way; we are still looking on our old acquaintance, *Time*; though now so wasted and reduced, that we can see little more of him than his wings and his scythe: our age enlarges his wings to our imagination; and our fear of death, his scythe; as *Time* himself grows less. His consumption is deep; his annihilation is at hand."

This is a dilution of the magnificent image : —

"Tims in advance behind him hides his wings,  
And seems to creep decrepit with his age.  
Behold him when past by! What then is seen  
But his broad plunions, swifter than the winds?"

Again : —

"A requesting Omnipotence? What can stun and confound thy reason more? What more can ravish and exalt thy heart? It cannot but ravish and exalt; it cannot but gloriously disturb and perplex thee, to take in all *that* thought suggests. 'Thou child of the dust! thou speck of misery and sin! how abject thy weakness! how great is thy power! Thou crawler on earth, and possible (I was about to say) controller of the skies! weigh, and weigh well, the wondrous truths I have in view: which cannot be weighed too much; which the more they are weighed, amaze the more; which to have supposed, before they were revealed, would have been as great madness, and to have presumed on as great sin, as it is now madness and sin not to believe.'"

Even in his Pindaric odes, in which he made the most violent effort against nature, he is still neither more nor less than the Young of the "Last Day," emptied and swept of his genius, and possessed by seven demons of fustian and bad rhyme. Even here, his "Ercles' vein" alternates with his moral platitudes, and we have the perpetual text of the "Night Thoughts : " —

"Gold pleasure buys;  
But pleasure dies,  
For soon the gross fruition cloy;  
Though raptures court,  
The sense is short;  
But virtue kindles living joys; —

Joys felt alone!  
Joys asked of none!  
Which Time's and Fortune's arrows miss:  
Joys that subsist,  
Though fates resist,  
An unprecious, endless bliss!

Unhappy they!  
 And falsely gay!  
 Who bask forever in success;  
 A constant feast  
 Quite pals the taste,  
*And long enjoyment is distress."*

In the "Last Day," again, which is the earliest thing he wrote, we have an anticipation of all his greatest faults and merits. Conspicuous among the faults is that attempt to exalt our conceptions of Deity by vulgar images and comparisons, which is so offensive in the later "Night Thoughts." In a burst of prayer and homage to God, called forth by the contemplation of Christ coming to judgment, he asks, Who brings the change of the seasons? and answers —

"Not the great Ottoman, or greater Czar;  
 Not Europe's arbitress of peace and war!"

Conceive the soul, in its most solemn moments, assuring God that it does not place His power below that of Louis Napoleon or Queen Victoria!

But in the midst of uneasy rhymes, inappropriate imagery, vaulting sublimity that o'erleaps itself, and vulgar emotions, we have in this poem an occasional flash of genius, a touch of simple grandeur, which promises as much as Young ever achieved. Describing the on-coming of the dissolution of all things, he says: —

"No sun in radiant glory shines on high;  
*No light but from the terrors of the sky."*

And again, speaking of great armies: —

"Whose rear lay wrapt in night, while breaking dawn  
 Rous'd the broad front, and call'd the battle on."

And this wail of the lost souls is fine: —

"And this for sin?  
 Could I offend if I had never been?  
 But still increas'd the senseless, happy mass,  
 Flow'd in the stream, or *shiver'd in the grass?*  
 Father of mortals! why from silent earth  
 Didst Thou awake and curse me into birth?  
 Tear me from quiet, ravish me from night,  
 And make a thankless present of Thy light?  
 Push into being a reverse of Thee,  
 And animate a clod with misery?"

But it is seldom in Young's rhymed poems that the effect of a felicitous thought or image is not counteracted by our sense of the constraint he suffered from the necessities of rhyme, — that "Gothic demon," as he afterwards called it, "which modern poetry tasting, became mortal." In relation to his own power, no one will question the truth of his dictum, that "blank verse is verse unfallen, uncurst; verse reclaimed, re-enthroned in the true language of the gods; who never thundered nor suffered their Homer to thunder in rhyme." His want of mastery in rhyme is especially a drawback on the effect of his Satires; for epigrams and witticisms are peculiarly susceptible to the intrusion of a superfluous word, or to an inversion which implies constraint. Here, even more than elsewhere, the art that conceals art is an absolute requisite, and to have a witticism presented to us in limping or cumbrous rhythm is as counteractive to any electrifying effect as to see the tentative grimaces by which a comedian prepares a grotesque countenance. We discern the process, instead of being startled by the result.

This is one reason why the Satires, read *seriatim*, have a flatness to us, which, when we afterwards read picked passages, we are inclined to disbelieve in, and to attribute to some deficiency in our own mood. But there are deeper reasons for that dissatisfaction. Young is not a satirist of a high order. His satire has neither the terrible vigor, the lacerating energy of genuine indignation, nor the humor which owns loving fellowship with the poor human nature it laughs at; nor yet the personal bitterness which, as in Pope's characters of Sporns and Attious, insures those living touches by virtue of which the individual and particular in Art becomes the universal and immortal. Young could never describe a real complex human being; but what he *could* do with eminent success, was to describe with neat and finished point obvious *types* of manners rather than of character, — to write oold and clever epigrams on personified vices and absurdities. There is no more emotion in his satire than if he were turning witty verses on a waxen image of Cupid, or a lady's glove. He has none of those felicitous epithets, none of those pregnant lines, by which Pope's Satires have enriched the ordinary speech of educated men. Young's wit will be found in almost every instance to consist in that antithetic combination of ideas which, of all the forms of wit, is most within reach of clever effort. In his gravest arguments, as well as in his lightest satire, one might imagine that he had set himself to work out

the problem, how much antithesis might be got out of a given subject. And there he completely succeeds. His neatest portraits are all wrought on this plan. Narcissus, for example, who —

“Omits no duty; nor can Envy say  
He miss’d, these many years, the Church or Play;  
He makes no noise in Parliament, ’tis true;  
But pays his debts, and visit when ’tis due;  
His character and gloves are ever clean,  
And then he can out-bow the bowing Dean;  
A smile eternal on his lip he wears,  
Which equally the wise and worthless shares.  
In gay fatigues, this most undaunted chief,  
Patient of idleness beyond belief,  
Most charitably lends the town his face  
For ornament in every public place;  
As sure as cards he to th’ assembly comes,  
And is the furniture of drawing-rooms:  
When Ombre calls, his hand and heart are free,  
And, joined to two, he fails not — to make three:  
Narcissus is the glory of his race;  
For who does nothing with a better grace?  
To deck my list by nature were designed  
Such shining expletives of human kind,  
Who want, while through blank life they dream along,  
*Sense to be right and passion to be wrong.*”

It is but seldom that we find a touch of that easy slyness which gives an additional zest to surprise; but here is an instance: —

“See Tityrus, with merriment possess’d,  
Is burst with laughter ere he hears the jest.  
What need he stay? for when the joke is o’er,  
His *teeth* will be no whiter than before.”

Like Pope, whom he imitated, he sets out with a psychological mistake as the basis of his satire, attributing all forms of folly to one passion — the love of fame, or vanity, — a much grosser mistake, indeed, than Pope’s exaggeration of the extent to which the “ruling passion” determines conduct in the individual. Not that Young is consistent in his mistake. He sometimes implies no more than what is the truth — that the love of fame is the cause, not of all follies, but of many.

Young’s satires on women are superior to Pope’s, which is only saying that they are superior to Pope’s greatest failure. We can more frequently pick out a couplet as successful

than an entire sketch. Of the too emphatic Syrena, he says :—

“ Her judgment just, her sentence is too strong;  
Because she's right, she's ever in the wrong.”

Of the diplomatic Julia :—

“ For her own breakfast she'll project a scheme,  
Nor take her tea without a stratagem.”

Of Lyce, the old painted coquette :—

“ In vain the cock has summoned sprites away;  
She walks at noon and blasts the bloom of day.”

Of the nymph who, “ gratis, clears religious mysteries : ” —

“ 'Tis hard, too, she who makes no use but chat  
Of her religion, should be barr'd in that.”

The description of the literary *belle*, Daphne, well prefaces that of Stella, admired by Johnson :—

“ With legs toss'd high, on her sophee she sits,  
Vouchsafing audience to contending wits:  
Of each performance she's the final test;  
One act read o'er, she prophesies the rest;  
And then, pronouncing with decisive air,  
Fully convinces all the town — *she's a fair*.  
Had lovely Daphne Hecatessa's face,  
How would her elegance of taste decrease!  
Some ladies' judgment in their features lies,  
And all their genius sparkles in their eyes.  
But hold, she cries, lampooner! have a care:  
Must I want common sense because I'm fair?  
O no; see Stella: her eyes shine as bright  
As if her tongue was never in the right;  
And yet what real learning, judgment, fire!  
She seems inspir'd, and can herself inspire.  
How then (if malice ruled not all the fair)  
*Could Daphne publish, and could she forbear ?* ”

After all, when we have gone through Young's seven Satires, we seem to have made but an indifferent meal. They are a sort of fricassee, with little solid meat in them, and yet the flavor is not always piquant. It is curious to find him, when he pauses a moment from his satiric sketching, recurring to his old platitudes :—

"Can gold calm passion, or make reason shine?  
Can we dig peace or wisdom from the mine?  
Wisdom to gold prefer;"

platitudes which he seems inevitably to fall into, for the same reason that some men are constantly asserting their contempt for criticism — because he felt the opposite so keenly.

The outburst of genius in the earlier books of the "Night Thoughts" is the more remarkable, that in the interval between them and the Satires, he had produced nothing but his Pindaric odes, in which he fell far below the level of his previous works. Two sources of this sudden strength were the freedom of blank verse and the presence of a genuine emotion. Most persons, in speaking of the "Night Thoughts," have in their minds only the two or three first Nights, the majority of readers rarely getting beyond these, unless, as Wilson says, they "have but few books, are poor, and live in the country." And in these earlier Nights there is enough genuine sublimity and genuine sadness to bribe us into too favorable a judgment of them as a whole. Young had only a very few things to say or sing — such as that life is vain, that death is imminent, that man is immortal, that virtue is wisdom, that friendship is sweet, and that the source of virtue is the contemplation of death and immortality, — and even in his two first Nights he had said almost all he had to say in his finest manner. Through these first outpourings of "complaint" we feel that the poet is really sad, that the bird is singing over a rifled nest; and we bear with his morbid picture of the world and of life, as the Job-like lament of a man whom "the hand of God hath touched." Death has carried away his best-beloved, and that "silent land" whither they are gone has more reality for the desolate one than this world which is empty of their love: —

"This is the desert, this the solitude;  
How populous, how vital is the grave!"

Joy died with the loved one: —

"The disenchanted earth  
Lost all her lustre. Where her glitt'ring towers?  
Her golden mountains, where? All darken'd down  
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears:  
*The great magician's dead!*"

Under the pang of parting, it seems to the bereaved man as if love were only a nerve to suffer with, and he sickens at the

thought of every joy of which he must one day say — "*it was.*" In its unreasoning anguish, the soul rushes to the idea of perpetuity as the one element of bliss. —

"O ye blest scenes of permanent delight! —  
 Could ye, so rich in rapture, fear an end, —  
 That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,  
 And quite unparadise the realms of light."

In a man under the immediate pressure of a great sorrow, we tolerate morbid exaggerations; we are prepared to see him turn away a weary eye from sunlight and flowers and sweet human faces, as if this rich and glorious life had no significance but as a preliminary of death; we do not criticise his views, we compassionate his feelings. And so it is with Young in these earlier Nights. There is already some artificiality even in his grief, and feeling often slides into rhetoric, but through it all we are thrilled with the unmistakable cry of pain, which makes us tolerant of egoism and hyperbole: —

"In every varied posture, place, and hour,  
 How widow'd ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy!  
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!  
 Through the dark postern of time long elapsed  
 Led softly, by the stillness of the night, —  
 Led like a murderer (and such it proves!)  
 Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past, —  
 In quest of wretchedness, perversely strays;  
 And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts  
 Of my departed joys."

But when he becomes didactic, rather than complaining, — when he ceases to sing his sorrows, and begins to insist on his opinions, — when that distaste for life which we pity as a transient feeling, is thrust upon us as a theory, we become perfectly cool and critical, and are not in the least inclined to be indulgent to false views and selfish sentiments.

Seeing that we are about to be severe on Young's failings and failures, we ought, if a reviewer's space were elastic, to dwell also on his merits, — on the startling vigor of his imagery — on the occasional grandeur of his thought — on the piquant force of that grave satire into which his meditations continually run. But, since our "limits" are rigorous, we must content ourselves with the less agreeable half of the critic's duty; and we may the rather do so, because it would be difficult to say anything new of Young in the way of admiration, while we think there are many salutary lessons remaining to be drawn from his faults.



One of the most striking characteristics of Young is his *radical insincerity as a poetic artist*. This, added to the thin and artificial texture of his wit, is the true explanation of the paradox — that a poet who is often inopportunistically witty has the opposite vice of bombastic absurdity. The source of all grandiloquence is the want of taking for a criterion the true qualities of the object described, or the emotion expressed. The grandiloquent man is never bent on saying what he feels or what he sees, but on producing a certain effect on his audience; hence he may float away into utter inanity without meeting any criterion to arrest him. Here lies the distinction between grandiloquence and genuine fancy or bold imaginativeness. The fantastic or the boldly imaginative poet may be as sincere as the most realistic: he is true to his own sensibilities or inward vision, and in his wildest flights he never breaks loose from his criterion — the truth of his own mental state. Now, this disruption of language from genuine thought and feeling is what we are constantly detecting in Young; and his insincerity is the more likely to betray him into absurdity, because he habitually treats of abstractions, and not of concrete objects or specific emotions. He descants perpetually on virtue, religion, "the good man," life, death, immortality, eternity — subjects which are apt to give a facetious grandeur to empty wordiness. When a poet floats in the empyrean, and only takes a bird's-eye view of the earth, some people accept the mere fact of his soaring for sublimity, and mistake his dim vision of earth for proximity to heaven. Thus: —

" His hand the good man fixes on the skies,  
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl,"

may perhaps pass for sublime with some readers. But pause a moment to realize the image, and the monstrous absurdity of a man's grasping the skies, and hanging habitually suspended there, while he contemptuously bids the earth roll, warns you that no genuine feeling could have suggested so unnatural a conception.

Examples of such vicious imagery, resulting from insincerity, may be found, perhaps, in almost every page of the "Night Thoughts." But simple assertions or aspirations, undisguised by imagery, are often equally false. No writer whose rhetoric was checked by the slightest truthful intentions, could have said, —

"An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,  
And roll for ever."

Abstracting the more poetical associations with the eye, this is hardly less absurd than if he had wished to stand forever with his mouth open.

Again —

"Far beneath  
A soul immortal is a mortal joy."

Happily for human nature, we are sure no man really believes that. Which of us has the impiety not to feel that our souls are only too narrow for the joy of looking into the trusting eyes of our children, of reposing on the love of a husband or wife, — nay, of listening to the divine voice of music, or watching the calm brightness of autumn afternoons? But Young could utter this falsity without detecting it, because, when he spoke of "mortal joys," he rarely had in his mind any object to which he could attach sacredness. He was thinking of bishoprics and benefices, of smiling monarchs, patronizing prime ministers, and a "much indebted muse." Of anything between these and eternal bliss, he was but rarely and moderately conscious. Often, indeed, he sinks very much below even the bishopric, and seems to have no notion of earthly pleasure, but such as breathes gaslight and the fumes of wine. His picture of life is precisely such as you would expect from a man who has risen from his bed at two o'clock in the afternoon with a headache, and a dim remembrance that he has added to his "debts of honor:" —

"What wretched repetition cloy us here!  
What periodic potions for the sick,  
Distemper'd bodies, and distemper'd minds!"

And then he flies off to his usual antithesis: —

"In an eternity what scenes shall strike!  
Adventures thicken, novelties surprise!"

"Earth" means lords and levees, duchesses and Dalilahs, South-Sea dreams and illegal percentage; and the only things distinctly preferable to these are, eternity and the stars. Deprive Young of this antithesis, and more than half his eloquence would be shrivelled up. Place him on a breezy common, where the furze is in its golden bloom, where children are playing, and horses are standing in the sunshine with

fondling necks, and he would have nothing to say. There are neither depths of guilt, nor heights of glory; and we doubt whether in such a scene he would be able to pay his usual compliment to the Creator: —

“Where’er I turn, what claim on all applause!”

It is true that he sometimes — not often — speaks of virtue as capable of sweetening life, as well as of taking the sting from death and winning heaven; and, lest we should be guilty of any unfairness to him, we will quote the two passages which convey this sentiment the most explicitly. In the one, he gives Lorenzo this excellent recipe for obtaining cheerfulness: —

“Go, fix some weighty truth;  
Chain down some passion; do some generous good;  
Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to smile;  
Correct thy friend; befriend thy greatest foe;  
Or, with warm heart, and confidence divine,  
Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee.”

The other passage is vague, but beautiful, and its music has murmured in our minds for many years: —

“The cuckoo seasons sing  
The same dull note to such as nothing prize  
But what those seasons from the teeming earth  
To doting sense indulge. But nobler minds,  
Which relish fruit unripen’d by the sun,  
Make their days various; various as the dyes  
On the dove’s neck, which wanton in his rays.  
On minds of dove-like innocence possess’d,  
On lighten’d minds that bask in Virtue’s beams,  
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves  
In that for which they long, for which they live.  
Their glorious efforts, wing’d with heavenly hopes,  
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;  
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents  
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;  
While Nature’s circle, like a chariot wheel,  
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,  
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour;  
Advancing virtue in a line to bliss.”

Even here, where he is in his most amiable mood, you see at what a telescopic distance he stands from mother Earth and simple human joys — “Nature’s circle rolls beneath.” Indeed, we remember no mind in poetic literature that seems to have absorbed less of the beauty and the healthy breath of the

common landscape than Young's. His images, often grand and finely presented — witness that sublimely sudden leap of thought,

“Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,  
 From ambient azure shell, and spring to life” —

lie almost entirely within that circle of observation which would be familiar to a man who lived in town, hung about the theatres, read the newspaper, and went home often by moon and star light. There is no natural object nearer than the moon that seems to have any strong attraction for him, and even to the moon he chiefly appeals for patronage, and “pays his court” to her. It is reckoned among the many deficiencies of Lorenzo, that he “never asked the moon one question” — an omission which Young thinks eminently unbecoming a rational being. He describes nothing so well as a comet, and is tempted to linger with fond detail over nothing more familiar than the day of judgment and an imaginary journey among the stars. Once on Saturn's ring, he feels at home, and his language becomes quite easy: —

“What behold I now?  
 A wilderness of wonders burning round,  
 Where larger sons inhabit higher spheres;  
 Perhaps the villas of descending gods!”

It is like a sudden relief from a strained posture when, in the “Night Thoughts,” we come on any allusion that carries us to the lanes, woods, or fields. Such allusions are amazingly rare, and we could almost count them on a single hand. That we may do him no injustice, we will quote the three best: —

“Like blossom'd trees o'erturned by vernal storm,  
 Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay.”

“In the same brook none ever bathed him twice:  
 To the same life none ever twice awoke.  
 We call the brook the same — the same we think  
 Our life, though still more rapid in its flow;  
 Nor mark the much irrevocably lapsed,  
 And mingled with the sea.”

“The crown of manhood is a winter joy;  
 An evergreen that stands the northern blast,  
 And blossoms in the rigor of our fate.”

The adherence to abstractions, or to the personification of abstractions, is closely allied in Young to the want of genuine

*emotion.* He sees Virtue sitting on a mount serene, far above the mists and storms of earth: he sees Religion coming down from the skies, with this world in her left hand and the other world in her right: but we never find him dwelling on virtue or religion as it really exists — in the emotions of a man dressed in an ordinary coat, and seated by his fireside of an evening, with his hand resting on the head of his little daughter; in courageous effort for unselfish ends, in the internal triumph of justice and pity over personal resentment, in all the sublime self-renunciation and sweet charities which are found in the details of ordinary life. Now, emotion links itself with particulars, and only in a faint and secondary manner with abstractions. An orator may discourse very eloquently on injustice in general, and leave his audience cold; but let him state a special case of oppression, and every heart will throb. The most untheoretic persons are aware of this relation between true emotion and particular facts, as opposed to general terms, and implicitly recognize it in the repulsion they feel towards any one who professes strong feeling about abstractions, — in the interjectional “humbug!” which immediately rises to their lips.

If we except the passages in Philander, Narcissa, and Lucia, there is hardly a trace of human sympathy, of self-forgetfulness in the joy or sorrow of a fellow-being, throughout this long poem, which professes to treat the various phases of man’s destiny. And even in the *Narcissa Night*, Young repels us by the low moral tone of his exaggerated lament. This married step-daughter died at Lyons, and, being a Protestant, was denied burial, so that her friends had to bury her in secret — one of the many miserable results of superstition, but not a fact to throw an educated, still less a Christian man, into a fury of hatred and vengeance, in contemplating it after the lapse of five years. Young, however, takes great pains to simulate a bad feeling: —

“Of grief  
And indignation rival bursts I pour’d,  
Half execration mingled with my pray’r;  
Kindled at man, while I his God ador’d;  
Sore grudg’d the savage land her sacred dust;  
Stamp’d the curs’d soil; and with *humanity*  
(*Denied Narcissa*) wish’d them all a grave.”

The odiously bad taste of this last clause makes us hope that it is simply a platitude, and not intended as a witticism, until

he removes the possibility of this favorable doubt by immediately asking, "Flows my resentment into guilt?"

When, by an afterthought, he attempts something like sympathy, he only betrays more clearly his want of it. Thus, in the first Night, when he turns from his private griefs to depict earth as a hideous abode of misery for all mankind, and asks —

"What then am I, who sorrow for myself?" —

he falls at once into calculating the benefit of sorrowing for others: —

"More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts:  
*And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.*  
 Nor virtue, more than prudence, bids me give  
 Swollen thought a second channel,"

This remarkable negation of sympathy is in perfect consistency with Young's theory of ethics: —

"Virtue is a crime,  
 A crime to reason, if it costs us pain  
 Unpaid."

If there is no immortality for man, —

"Sense! take the rein; blind Passion, drive us on;  
 And Ignorance! befriend us on our way. . . .  
 Yes; give the pulse full empire; live the brute,  
 Since as the brute we die. The sum of man,  
 Of godlike man, to revel and to rot."

"If this life's gain invites him to the deed,  
 Why not his country sold, his father slain?"

"Ambition, avarice, by the wise disdain'd,  
 Is perfect wisdom, while mankind are fools,  
 And think a turf or tombstone covers all."

"Die for thy country, thou romantic fool!  
 Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink."

"As in the dying parent dies the child,  
 Virtue with Immortality expires.  
 Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,  
 Whate'er his boast, has told me he's a knave.  
 His duty 'tis to love himself alone,  
 Nor care though mankind perish, if he smiles."

We can imagine the man who "denies his soul immortal," replying, "It is quite possible that *you* would be a knave, and love yourself alone, if it were not for your belief in immortality; but you are not to force upon me what would result from your own utter want of moral emotion. I am just and honest, not because I expect to live in another world, but because, having felt the pain of injustice and dishonesty towards myself, I have a fellow-feeling with other men, who would suffer the same pain if I were unjust or dishonest towards them. Why should I give my neighbor short weight in this world, because there is not another world in which I should have nothing to weigh out to him? I am honest, because I don't like to inflict evil on others in this life, not because I'm afraid of evil to myself in another. The fact is, I do *not* love myself alone, whatever logical necessity there may be for that conclusion in your mind. I have a tender love for my wife, and children, and friends, and through that love I sympathize with like affections in other men. It is a pang to me to witness the suffering of a fellow-being, and I feel his suffering the more acutely because he is *mortal* — because his life is so short, and I would have it, if possible, filled with happiness and not misery. Through my union and fellowship with the men and women I *have* seen, I feel a like, though a fainter, sympathy with those I have *not* seen; and I am able so to live in imagination with the generations to come, that their good is not alien to me, and is a stimulus to me to labor for ends which may not benefit myself, but will benefit them. It is possible that you might prefer to 'live the brute,' to sell your country, or to slay your father, if you were not afraid of some disagreeable consequences from the criminal laws of another world; but even if I could conceive no motive but by my own worldly interest or the gratification of my animal desires, I have not observed that beastliness, treachery, and parricide, are the direct way to happiness and comfort on earth."

Thus far the man who "denies himself immortal" might give a warrantable reply to Young's assumption of peculiar loftiness in maintaining that "virtue with immortality expires." We may admit, indeed, that if the better part of virtue consists, as Young appears to think, in contempt for mortal joys, in "meditation of our own decease," and in "applause" of God in the style of a congratulatory address to her Majesty — all which has small relation to the wellbeing of mankind on this earth — the motive to it must be gathered

from something that lies quite outside the sphere of human sympathy. But, for certain other elements of virtue, which are of more obvious importance to plain people, — a delicate sense of our neighbor's rights, an active participation in the joys and sorrows of our fellowmen, a magnanimous acceptance of privation or suffering for ourselves when it is the condition of rescue for others — in a word, the widening and strengthening of our sympathetic nature, — it is surely of some moment to contend, that they have no more direct dependence on the belief in a future state than the interchange of gases in the lungs on the plurality of worlds. Nay, it is conceivable that in some minds the deep pathos lying in the thought of human mortality — that we are here for a little while and then vanish away, that this earthly life is all that is given to our loved ones and to our many suffering fellow-men — lies nearer the fountains of moral emotion than the conception of extended existence. And surely it ought to be a welcome fact, if the thought of *mortality*, as well as of immortality, be favorable to virtue. We can imagine that the proprietors of a patent water-supply may have a dread of common springs; but for those who only share the general need there cannot be too great a security against a lack of fresh water — or of pure morality. It should be matter of unmixed rejoicing if this latter necessary of healthful life has its evolution insured in the interaction of human souls as certainly as the evolution of science or of art, with which, indeed, it is but a twin ray, melting into them with undefinable limits.

To return to Young. We can often detect a man's deficiencies in what he admires more clearly than in what he condemns, — in the sentiments he presents as laudable rather than in those he decries. And in Young's notion of what is lofty he casts a shadow by which we can measure him without further trouble. For example, in arguing for human immortality, he says : —

"First, what is *true ambition*? The pursuit  
Of glory *nothing less than man can share*.

The Visible and Present are for brutes,  
A slender portion, and a narrow bound!  
These Reason, with an energy divine  
O'erleaps, and claims the Future and Unseen;  
The vast Unseen, the Future fathomless!  
When the great soul buoys up to this high point,  
Leaving gross Nature's sediments below,  
'Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits  
The sage and hero of the fields and woods,  
Asserts his rank, and rises into man."



So, then, if it were certified that, as some benevolent minds have tried to infer, our dumb fellow-creatures would share a future existence, in which it is to be hoped we should neither beat, starve, nor maim them, our ambition for a future life would cease to be "lofty!" This is a notion of loftiness which may pair off with Dr. Whewell's celebrated observation, that Bentham's moral theory is low, because it includes justice and mercy to brutes.

But, for a reflection of Young's moral personality on a colossal scale, we must turn to those passages where his rhetoric is at its utmost stretch of inflation — where he addresses the Deity, discourses of the Divine operations, or describes the last judgment. As a compound of vulgar pomp, crawling adulation, and hard selfishness, presented under the guise of piety, there are few things in literature to surpass the ninth Night, entitled "Consolation," especially in the pages where he describes the last judgment — a subject to which, with naïve self-betrayal, he applies phraseology favored by the exuberant penny-a-liner. Thus, when God descends, and the groans of hell are opposed by "shouts of joy," much as cheers and groans contend at a public meeting where the resolutions are *not* passed unanimously, the poet completes his climax in this way: —

"Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,  
The *charmed spectators* thunder their applause."

In the same taste, he sings: —

"Eternity, the various sentence past,  
Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,  
*Sulphureous or ambrosial.*"

Exquisite delicacy of indication! He is too nice to be specific as to the interior of the "sulphureous" abode; but when once half the human race are shut up there, hear how he enjoys turning the key on them! —

"What ensues?  
The deed predominant, the deed of deeds!  
Which makes a hell of hell, a *heaven of heaven!*  
The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns  
Her adamant key's enormous size  
Through Destiny's inextricable wards,  
*Deep driving every bolt* on both their fates.  
Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven,  
Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,

Ten thousand, thousand fathom; there to rust  
 And ne'er unlock her resolution more.  
 The deep resounds; and Hell, through all her glooms,  
 Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.'

This is one of the blessings for which Dr. Young thanks God "most: " —

"For all I bless Thee, most, for the severe;  
 Her death — my own at hand — *the fiery gulf,*  
*That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!*  
*It thunders; — but it thunders to preserve;*  
*Its wholesome dread*  
*Averts the dreaded pain; its hideous groans*  
*Join Heaven's sweet Hallelujahs in Thy praise,*  
 Great Source of good alone! How kind in all!  
 In vengeance kind! Pain, Death, Gehenna, *save*" . . .

i. e., save me, Dr. Young, who, in return for that favor, promise to give my divine patron the monopoly of that exuberance in laudatory epithet, of which specimens may be seen at any moment in a large number of dedications and odes to kings, queens, prime ministers, and other persons of distinction. That, in Young's conception, is what God delights in. His crowning aim in the "drama" of the ages is to vindicate his own renown. The God of the "Night Thoughts" is simply Young himself "writ large" — a didactic poet, who "lectures" mankind in the antithetic hyperbole of mortal and immortal joys, earth and the stars, hell and heaven; and expects the tribute of inexhaustible "applause." Young has no conception of religion as anything else than egoism turned heavenward; and he does not merely imply this, he insists on it. Religion, he tells us, in argumentative passages too long to quote, is "ambition, pleasure, and the love of gain," directed towards the joys of the future life instead of the present. And his ethics correspond to his religion. He vacillates, indeed, in his ethical theory, and shifts his position in order to suit his immediate purpose in argument; but he never changes his level so as to see beyond the horizon of mere selfishness. Sometimes he insists, as we have seen, that the belief in a future life is the only basis of morality; but elsewhere he tells us —

"In self-applause is virtue's golden prize."

Virtue, with Young, must always squint — must never look straight towards the immediate object of its emotion and

effort. Thus, if a man risks perishing in the snow himself rather than forsake a weaker comrade, he must either do this because his hopes and fears are directed to another world, or because he desires to applaud himself afterwards! Young, if we may believe him, would despise the action as folly unless it had these motives. Let us hope he was not so bad as he pretended to be! The tides of the divine life in man move under the thickest ice of theory.

Another indication of Young's deficiency in moral, *i.e.*, in sympathetic emotion, is his unintermitting habit of pedagogic moralizing. On its theoretic and perceptive side, Morality touches Science; on its emotional side, poetic Art. Now, the products of poetic Art are great in proportion as they result from the immediate prompting of innate power, and not from labored obedience to a theory or rule; and the presence of genius or innate prompting is directly opposed to the perpetual consciousness of a rule. The action of faculty is imperious, and supersedes the reflection *why* it should act. In the same way, in proportion as morality is emotional, it will exhibit itself in direct sympathetic feeling and action, and not as the recognition of a rule. Love does not say, "I ought to love" — it loves. Pity does not say, "It is right to be pitiful" — it pities. Justice does not say, "I am bound to be just" — it feels justly. It is only where moral emotion is comparatively weak that the contemplation of a rule or theory habitually mingles with its action; and in accordance with this, we think experience, both in literature and life, has shown that the minds which are predominantly didactic, are deficient in sympathetic emotion. A man who is perpetually thinking in monitory apothegms, who has an unintermittent flux of rebuke, can have little energy left for simple feeling. And this is the case with Young. In his highest flights of contemplation, and his most wailing soliloquies, he interrupts himself to fling an admonitory parenthesis at Lorenzo, or to hint that "folly's creed" is the reverse of his own. Before his thoughts can flow, he must fix his eye on an imaginary miscreant, who gives unlimited scope for lecturing, and re-criminates just enough to keep the spring of admonition and argument going to the extent of nine books. It is curious to see how this pedagogic habit of mind runs through Young's contemplation of Nature. As the tendency to see our own sadness reflected in the external world has been called by Mr. Ruskin the "pathetic fallacy," so we may call Young's disposition to see a rebuke or a warning in every natural object,

the "pedagogic fallacy." To his mind, the heavens are "forever *scolding* as they shine;" and the great function of the stars is to be a "lecture to mankind." The conception of the Deity as a didactic author is not merely an implicit point of view with him; he works it out in elaborate imagery, and at length makes it the occasion of his most extraordinary achievement in the "art of sinking," by exclaiming — *à propos*, we need hardly say, of the nocturnal heavens —

"Divine Instructor! Thy first volume this  
For man's perusal! all in CAPITALS!"

It is this pedagogic tendency, this sermonizing attitude of Young's mind, which produces the wearisome monotony of his pauses. After the first two or three Nights, he is rarely singing, rarely pouring forth any continuous melody inspired by the spontaneous flow of thought or feeling. He is rather occupied with argumentative insistence, with hammering in the proofs of his propositions by disconnected verses, which he puts down at intervals. The perpetual recurrence of the pause at the end of the line throughout long passages, makes them as fatiguing to the ear as a monotonous chant, which consists of the endless repetition of one short musical phrase. For example: —

"Past hours,  
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,  
If folly bound our prospect by the grave,  
All feeling of futurity be numb'd,  
All godlike passion for eternals quench'd,  
All relish of realities expired;  
Renounced all correspondence with the skies;  
Our freedom chain'd; quite wingless our desire;  
In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;  
Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust;  
Dismounted every great and glorious aim;  
Enthralled every faculty divine,  
Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world."

How different from the easy, graceful melody of Cowper's blank verse! Indeed it is hardly possible to criticise Young, without being reminded at every step of the contrast presented to him by Cowper. And this contrast urges itself upon us the more from the fact that there is, to a certain extent, a parallelism between the "Night Thoughts" and the "Task." In both poems, the author achieves his greatest in virtue of the new freedom conferred by blank verse; both poems are professedly didactic, and mingle much satire with

their graver meditations; both poems are the productions of men whose estimate of this life was formed by the light of a belief in immortality, and who were intensely attached to Christianity. On some grounds, we might have anticipated a more morbid view of things from Cowper than from Young. Cowper's religion was dogmatically the more gloomy, for he was a Calvinist; while Young was a "low" Arminian, believing that Christ died for all, and that the only obstacle to any man's salvation lay in his will, which he could change if he chose. There was deep and unusual sadness involved in Cowper's personal lot; while Young, apart from his ambitious and greedy discontent, seems to have had no exceptional sorrow.

Yet see how a lovely, sympathetic nature manifests itself in spite of creed and circumstance! Where is the poem that surpasses the "Task" in the genuine love it breathes, at once towards inanimate and animate existence—in truthfulness of perception and sincerity of presentation—in the calm gladness that springs from a delight in objects for their own sake, without self-reference—in divine sympathy with the lowliest pleasures, with the most short-lived capacity for pain? Here is no railing at the earth's "melancholy map," but the happiest lingering over her simplest scenes with all the fond minuteness of attention that belongs to love; no pompous rhetoric about the inferiority of the "brutes," but a warm plea on their behalf against man's inconsiderateness and cruelty, and a sense of enlarged happiness from their companionship in enjoyment; no vague rant about human misery and human virtue, but that close and vivid presentation of particular sorrows and privations, of particular deeds and misdeeds, which is the direct road to the emotions. How Cowper's exquisite mind falls with the mild warmth of morning sunlight on the commonest objects, at once disclosing every detail and investing every detail with beauty! No object is too small to prompt his song—not the sooty film on the bars, or the spoutless teapot holding a bit of mignonnette that serves to cheer the dingy town-lodging with a "hint that Nature lives;" and yet his song is never trivial, for he is alive to small objects, not because his mind is narrow, but because his glance is clear and his heart is large. Instead of trying to edify us by supercilious allusions to the "brutes" and the "stalls," he interests us in that tragedy of the hen-roost when the thief has wrenched the door—

\*  
 "Where Chanticleer amidst his harem sleeps  
*In unsuspecting pomp;"*

in the patient cattle, that on the winter's morning

"Mourn in corners where the fence  
Screens them, and seem half petrified to sleep  
*In unrecumbent sadness ;*"

in the little squirrel, that, surprised by him in his woodland walk,

"At once, swift as a bird,  
Ascends the neighboring beech; there whisks his brush,  
And perks his ears, and stamps, and cries aloud,  
With all the prettiness of feigned alarm  
And anger insignificantly fierce."

And then he passes into reflection, not with curt apothegm and snappish reproof, but with that melodious flow of utterance which belongs to thought when it is carried in a stream of feeling :—

"The heart is hard in nature, and unfit  
For human fellowship, as being void  
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike  
To love and friendship both, that is not pleased  
With sight of animals enjoying life,  
Nor feels their happiness augment his own."

His large and tender heart embraces the most every-day forms of human life : the carter driving his team through the wintry storm; the cottager's wife who, painfully nursing the embers on her hearth, while her infants "sit cowering o'er the sparks,"

"Retires, content to quake, so they be warmed ;"

or the villager, with her little ones, going out to pick

"A cheap but wholesome salad from the brook ;"

and he compels our colder natures to follow his in its manifold sympathies, not by exhortations, not by telling us to meditate at midnight, to "indulge" the thought of death, or to ask ourselves how we shall "weather an eternal night," *but by presenting to us the object of his compassion truthfully and lovingly.* And when he handles greater themes, when he takes a wider survey, and considers the men or the deeds which have a direct influence on the welfare of communities and nations, there is the same unselfish warmth of feeling, the same scrupulous truthfulness. He is never vague in his remonstrance or his satire; but puts his finger on some par-

#### 44 WORLDLINESS AND OTHER-WORLDLINESS:

ticular vice or folly, which excites his indignation or "dissolves his heart in pity," because of some specific injury it does to his fellow-man or to a sacred cause. And when he is asked why he interests himself about the sorrows and wrongs of others, hear what is the reason he gives. Not, like Young, that the movements of the planets show a mutual dependence, and that

"Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this  
Material picture of benevolence;" —

or that, —

"More generous sorrow while it sinks, exalts,  
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang."

What is Cowper's answer, when he imagines some "sage erudite, profound," asking him "What's the world to you?" —

"Much. *I was born of woman, and drew milk  
As sweet as charity from human breasts.*  
I think, articulate, I laugh and weep,  
And exercise all functions of a man.  
How then should I and any man that lives  
Be strangers to each other?"

Young is astonished that men can make war on each other — that any one can "seize his brother's throat," while

"The Planets cry, 'Forbear.'"

Cowper weeps because —

"There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart;  
*It does not feel for man.*"

Young applauds God as a monarch with an empire and a court quite superior to the English, or as an author who produces "volumes for man's perusal." Cowper sees his Father's love in all the gentle pleasures of the home fireside, in the charms even of the wintry landscape, and thinks —

"Happy who walks with Him! whom what he finds  
Of flavor or of scent in fruit or flower,  
Or what he views of beautiful or grand  
In nature, from the broad majestic oak  
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,  
*Prompts with remembrance of a present God.*"

To conclude — for we must arrest ourselves in a contrast

that would lead us beyond our bounds: Young flies for his utmost consolation to the day of judgment, when

“Final Ruin fiercely drives  
Her ploughshare o’er Creation ;”

when earth, stars, and suns are swept aside —

“And now, all dross removed, Heaven’s own pure day  
Full on the confines of our ether, flames :  
While (dreadful contrast !) far (how far !) beneath,  
Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas,  
And storms sulphureous ; her voracious jaws  
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey,” —

Dr. Young, and similar “ornaments of religion and virtue,” passing, of course, with grateful “applause” into the upper region. Cowper finds his highest inspiration in the Millennium — in the restoration of this our beloved home of earth to perfect holiness and bliss, when the Supreme

“Shall visit earth in mercy ; shall descend  
Propitious in His chariot paved with love ;  
And what His storms have blasted and defaced  
For man’s revolt, shall with a smile repair.”

And into what delicious melody his song flows at the thought of that blessedness to be enjoyed by future generations on earth ! —

“The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks  
Shout to each other, and the mountain-tops  
From distant mountains catch the flying joy ;  
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,  
Earth rolls the rapturous Hosanna round !”

The sum of our comparison is this: In Young we have the type of that deficient human sympathy, that impiety towards the present and the visible, which flies for its motives, its sanctities, and its religion, to the remote, the vague, and the unknown ; in Cowper we have the type of that genuine love which cherishes things in proportion to their nearness, and feels its reverence grow in proportion to the intimacy of its knowledge.



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## GERMAN WIT: HEINRICH HEINE.

"NOTHING," says Goethe, "is more significant of men's character than what they find laughable." The truth of this observation would perhaps have been more apparent if he had said *culture* instead of character. The last thing in which the cultivated man can have community with the vulgar is their jocularity; and we can hardly exhibit more strikingly the wide gulf which separates him from them than by comparing the object which shakes the diaphragm of a coal-heaver with the highly complex pleasure derived from a real witticism. That any high order of wit is exceedingly complex, and demands a ripe and strong mental development, has one evidence in the fact that we do not find it in boys at all in proportion to their manifestation of other powers. Clever boys generally aspire to the heroic and poetic rather than the comic, and the crudest of all their efforts are their jokes. Many a witty man will remember how, in his school-days, a practical joke, more or less Rabelaisian, was for him the *ne plus ultra* of the ludicrous. It seems to have been the same with the boyhood of mankind. The fun of early races was, we fancy, of the after-dinner kind — loud-throated laughter over the wine-cup, taken too little account of in sober moments to enter as an element into their Art, and differing as much from the laughter of a Chamfort or a Sheridan as the gastronomic enjoyment of an ancient Briton, whose dinner had no other "removes" than from acorns to beechmast and back again to acorns, differed from the subtle pleasures of the palate experienced by his turtle-eating descendant. It was their lot to live seriously through stages which to later generations were to become comedy, as those amiable-looking pre-Adamite amphibia which Professor Owen has restored for us in effigy at Sydenham doubtless took seriously the grotesque physiognomies of their kindred. Heavy experience in their case, as in every other, was the base from which the salt of future wit was to be made.

Humor is of earlier growth than Wit, and it is in accordance with this earlier growth that it has more affinity with

the poetic tendencies, while Wit is more nearly allied to the ratiocinative intellect. Humor draws its materials from situations and characteristics; Wit seizes on unexpected and complex relations. Humor is chiefly representative and descriptive; it is diffuse, and flows along without any other law than its own fantastic will; or it flits about like a will-o'-the-wisp, amazing us by its whimsical transitions. Wit is brief and sudden, and sharply defined as a crystal: it does not make pictures, it is not fantastic; but it detects an unsuspected analogy, or suggests a startling or confounding inference. Every one who has had the opportunity of making the comparison will remember that the effect produced on him by some witticisms is closely akin to the effect produced on him by subtle reasoning which lays open a fallacy or absurdity; and there are persons whose delight in such reasoning always manifests itself in laughter. This affinity of Wit with ratiocination is the more obvious in proportion as the species of wit is higher and deals less with words and with superficialities than with the essential qualities of things. Some of Johnson's most admirable witticisms consist in the suggestion of an analogy which immediately exposes the absurdity of an action or proposition; and it is only their ingenuity, condensation, and instantaneousness which lift them from reasoning into Wit — they are *reasoning raised to a higher power*. On the other hand, Humor, in its higher forms, and in proportion as it associates itself with the sympathetic emotions, continually passes into poetry: nearly all great modern humorists may be called prose poets.

Some confusion as to the nature of humor has been created by the fact, that those who have written most eloquently on it have dwelt almost exclusively on its higher forms, and have defined humor in general as the *sympathetic* presentation of incongruous elements in human nature and life — a definition which only applies to its later development. A great deal of humor may coexist with a great deal of barbarism, as we see in the middle ages; but the strongest flavor of the humor in such cases will come, not from sympathy, but more probably from triumphant egoism or intolerance; at best it will be the love of the ludicrous exhibiting itself in illustrations of successful cunning and of the *lex talionis*, as in "Reineke Fuchs," or shaking off in a holiday mood the yoke of a too exacting faith, as in the old Mysteries. Again, it is impossible to deny a high degree of humor to many practical jokes, but no sympathetic nature can enjoy them. Strange as

the genealogy may seem, the original parentage of that wonderful and delicious mixture of fun, fancy, philosophy, and feeling which constitutes modern humor, was probably the cruel mockery of a savage at the writhings of a suffering enemy — such is the tendency of things towards the better and more beautiful! Probably the reason why high culture demands more complete harmony with its moral sympathies in humor than in wit, is that humor is in its nature more prolix — that it has not the direct and irresistible force of wit. Wit is an electric shock, which takes us by violence quite independently of our predominant mental disposition; but humor approaches us more deliberately and leaves us masters of ourselves. Hence it is that, while coarse and cruel humor has almost disappeared from contemporary literature, coarse and cruel wit abounds. Even refined men cannot help laughing at a coarse *bon-mot* or a lacerating personality, if the "shock" of the witicism is a powerful one; while mere fun will have no power over them if it jar on their moral taste. Hence, too, it is that, while wit is perennial, humor is liable to become superannuated.

As is usual with definitions and classifications, however, this distinction between wit and humor does not exactly represent the actual fact. Like all other species, Wit and Humor overlap and blend with each other. There are *bon-mots*, like many of Charles Lamb's, which are a sort of facetious hybrids, we hardly know whether to call them witty or humorous; there are rather lengthy descriptions or narratives which, like Voltaire's "*Micromégas*," would be humorous if they were not so sparkling and antithetic, so pregnant with suggestion and satire, that we are obliged to call them witty. We rarely find wit untempered by humor, or humor without a spice of wit; and sometimes we find them both united in the highest degree in the same mind, as in Shakespeare and Molière. A happy conjunction this, for wit is apt to be cold, and thin-lipped, and Mephistophelean in men who have no relish for humor, whose lungs do never crow like Chanticleer at fun and drollery; and broad-faced rollicking humor needs the refining influence of wit. Indeed it may be said that there is no really fine writing in which wit has not an implicit, if not an explicit action. The wit may never rise to the surface, it may never flame out into a witticism; but it helps to give brightness and transparency, it warns off from flights and exaggerations which verge on the ridiculous — in every *genre* of writing it preserves a man from sinking into the *genre ennuyeux*. And it is eminently needed for this office in humorous writing; for, as humor

has no limits imposed on it by its material, no law but its own exuberance, it is apt to become preposterous and wearisome unless checked by wit, which is the enemy of all monotony, of all lengthiness, of all exaggeration.

Perhaps the nearest approach Nature has given us to a complete analysis, in which wit is as thoroughly exhausted of humor as possible, and humor as bare as possible of wit, is in the typical Frenchman and the typical German. Voltaire, the intensest example of pure wit, fails in most of his fictions from his lack of humor. "Micomégas" is a perfect tale, because, as it deals chiefly with philosophic ideas and does not touch the marrow of human feeling and life, the writer's wit and wisdom were all-sufficient for his purpose. Not so with "Candide." Here Voltaire had to give pictures of life as well as to convey philosophic truth and satire, and here we feel the want of humor. The sense of the ludicrous is continually defeated by disgust, and the scenes, instead of presenting us with an amusing or agreeable picture, are only the frame for a witticism. On the other hand, German humor generally shows no sense of measure, no instinctive tact; it is either floundering and clumsy as the antics of a leviathan, or laborious and interminable as a Lapland day, in which one loses all hope that the stars and quiet will ever come. For this reason Jean Paul, the greatest of German humorists, is unendurable to many readers, and frequently tiresome to all. Here, as elsewhere, the German shows the absence of that delicate perception, that sensibility to gradation, which is the essence of tact and taste, and the necessary concomitant of wit. All his subtlety is reserved for the region of metaphysics. For *Identität*, in the abstract, no one can have an acuter vision; but in the concrete he is satisfied with a very loose approximation. He has the finest nose for *Empirismus* in philosophical doctrine, but the presence of more or less tobacco-smoke in the air he breathes is imperceptible to him. To the typical German — *Vetter Michel* — it is indifferent whether his door-lock will catch; whether his teacup be more or less than an inch thick; whether or not his book have every other leaf unstitched; whether his neighbor's conversation be more or less of a shout; whether he pronounce *b* or *p*, *t* or *d*; whether or not his adored one's teeth be few and far between. He has the same sort of insensibility to gradations in time. A German comedy is like a German sentence: you see no reason in its structure why it should ever come to an end, and you accept the conclusion as an arrangement of Providence rather than of

the author. We have heard Germans use the word *Langeweile*, the equivalent for *ennui*, and we have secretly wondered *what* it can be that produces *ennui* in a German. Not the longest of long tragedies, for we have known him to pronounce that *höchst fesselnd*; not the heaviest of heavy books, for he delights in that as *gründlich*; not the slowest of journeys in a *Post-wagen*, for the slower the horses the more cigars he can smoke before he reaches his journey's end. German *ennui* must be something as superlative as Barclay's treble X, which, we suppose, implies an extremely unknown quantity of stupefaction.

It is easy to see that this national deficiency in nicety of perception must have its effect on the national appreciation and exhibition of Humor. You find in Germany ardent admirers of Shakespeare, who tell you that what they think most admirable in him is his *Wortspiel*, his verbal quibbles; and it is a remarkable fact that, among the five great races concerned in modern civilization, the German race is the only one which, up to the present century, had contributed nothing classic to the common stock of European wit and humor; unless "Reineke Fuchs" can be fairly claimed as a peculiarly Teutonic product. Italy was the birth-place of Pantomime and the immortal Pulcinello; Spain had produced Cervantes; France had produced Rabelais and Molière, and classic wits innumerable; England had yielded Shakespeare and a host of humorists. But Germany had borne no great comic dramatist, no great satirist, and she has not yet repaired the omission; she had not even produced any humorist of a high order. Among her great writers, Lessing is the one who is the most specifically witty. We feel the implicit influence of wit—the "flavor of mind"—throughout his writings; and it is often concentrated into pungent satire, as every reader of the "Hamburgische Dramaturgie" remembers. Still, Lessing's name has not become European through his wit, and his charming comedy, "Minna von Barnhelm," has won no place on a foreign stage. Of course, we do not pretend to an exhaustive acquaintance with German literature; we not only admit—we are sure—that it includes much comic writing of which we know nothing. We simply state the fact, that no German production of that kind, before the present century, ranked as European—a fact which does not, indeed, determine the amount of the national facetiousness, but which is quite decisive as to its quality. Whatever may be the stock of fun which Germany yields for home consumption, she has

provided little for the palate of other lands. All honor to her for the still greater things she has done for us! She has fought the hardest fight for freedom of thought, has produced the grandest inventions, has made magnificent contributions to science, has given us some of the divinest poetry, and quite the divinest music, in the world. We revere and treasure the products of the German mind. To say that that mind is not fertile in wit, is only like saying that excellent wheat-land is not rich pasture; to say that we do not enjoy German facetiousness, is no more than to say, that though the horse is the finest of quadrupeds, we do not like him to lay his hoof playfully on our shoulder. Still, as we have noticed that the pointless puns and stupid jocularity of the boy may ultimately be developed into the epigrammatic brilliancy and polished playfulness of the man; as we believe that raucy wit and chastened delicate humor are inevitably the results of invigorated and refined mental activity, — we can also believe that Germany will one day yield a crop of wits and humorists.

Perhaps there is already an earnest of that future crop in the existence of Heinrich Heine, a German born with the present century, who, to Teutonic imagination, sensibility, and humor, adds an amount of *esprit* that would make him brilliant among the most brilliant of Frenchmen. True, this unique German wit is half a Hebrew; but he and his ancestors spent their youth in German air, and were reared on *Wurst* and *Sauerkraut*, so that he is as much a German as a pheasant is an English bird, or a potato an Irish vegetable. But whatever else he may be, Heine is one of the most remarkable men of this age; no echo, but a real voice, and therefore, like all genuine things in this world, worth studying; a surpassing lyric poet, who has uttered our feelings for us in delicious song; a humorist, who touches leaden folly with the magic wand of his fancy, and transmutes it into the fine gold of art — who sheds his sunny smile on human tears, and makes them a beauteous rainbow on the cloudy background of life; a wit, who holds in his mighty hand the most scorching lightnings of satire; an artist in prose literature, who has shown even more completely than Goethe the possibilities of German prose; and — in spite of all charges against him, true as well as false — a lover of freedom, who has spoken wise and brave words on behalf of his fellow-men. He is, moreover, a suffering man, who, with all the highly wrought sensibility of genius, has to endure terrible physical ills; and as such he calls forth more than an intellectual interest. It is true, alas!



that there is a heavy weight in the other scale — that Heine's magnificent powers have often served only to give electric force to the expression of debased feeling, so that his works are no Phidian statue of gold, and ivory, and gems, but have not a little brass, and iron, and miry clay mingled with the precious metal. The audacity of his occasional coarseness and personality is unparalleled in contemporary literature, and has hardly been exceeded by the license of former days. Hence, before his volumes are put within the reach of immature minds, there is need of a friendly penknife to exercise a strict censorship. Yet, when all coarseness, all scurrility, all Mephistophelean contempt for the reverent feelings of other men, is removed, there will be a plenteous remainder of exquisite poetry, of wit, humor, and just thought. It is apparently too often a congenial task to write severe words about the transgressions committed by men of genius, especially when the censor has the advantage of being himself a man of no genius, so that those transgressions seem to him quite gratuitous; he, forsooth, never lacerated any one by his wit, or gave irresistible piquancy to a coarse allusion, and his indignation is not mitigated by any knowledge of the temptation that lies in transcendent power. We are also apt to measure what a gifted man has done by our arbitrary conception of what he might have done, rather than by a comparison of his actual doings with our own or those of other ordinary men. We make ourselves over-zealous agents of heaven, and demand that our brother should bring usurious interest for his five Talents, forgetting that it is less easy to manage five Talents than two. Whatever benefit there may be in denouncing the evil, it is after all more edifying, and certainly more cheering, to appreciate the good. Hence, in endeavoring to give our readers some account of Heine and his works, we shall not dwell lengthily on his failings; we shall not hold the candle up to dusty, vermin-haunted corners, but let the light fall as much as possible on the nobler and more attractive details. Our sketch of Heine's life, which has been drawn from various sources, will be free from everything like intrusive gossip, and will derive its coloring chiefly from the autobiographical hints and descriptions scattered through his own writings. Those of our readers who happen to know nothing of Heine, will in this way be making their acquaintance with the writer while they are learning the outline of his career.

We have said that Heine was born with the present century; but this statement is not precise, for we learn that,

according to his certificate of baptism, he was born December 12, 1799. However, as he himself says, the important point is, that he was born, and born on the banks of the Rhine, at Düsseldorf, where his father was a merchant. In his "Reisebilder" he gives us some recollections, in his wild poetic way, of the dear old town where he spent his childhood, and of his schoolboy troubles there. We shall quote from these in butterfly fashion, sipping a little nectar here and there, without regard to any strict order:—

"I first saw the light on the banks of that lovely stream, where Folly grows on the green hills, and in autumn is plucked, pressed, poured into casks, and sent into foreign lands. Believe me, I yesterday heard some one utter folly which, in anno 1811, lay in a bunch of grapes I then saw growing on the Johannisberg. . . . Mon Dieu! if I had only such faith in me that I could remove mountains, the Johannisberg would be the very mountain I should send for wherever I might be; but as my faith is not so strong, imagination must help me, and it transports me at once to the lovely Rhine. . . . I am again a child, and playing with other children on the Schlossplatz, at Düsseldorf on the Rhine. Yes, madam, there was I born; and I note this expressly, in case, after my death, seven cities—Schilda, Krahwinkel, Polkwitz, Bockum, Dülken, Göttingen, and Schoppenstadt—should contend for the honor of being my birthplace. Düsseldorf is a town on the Rhine; sixteen thousand men live there, and many hundred thousand men besides lie buried there. . . . Among them, many of whom my mother says, that it would be better if they were still living; for example, my grandfather and my uncle, the old Herr Von Geldern and the young Herr Von Geldern, both such celebrated doctors, who saved so many men from death, and yet must die themselves. And the pious Ursula, who carried me in her arms when I was a child, also lies buried there, and a rose-bush grows on her grave; she loved the scent of roses so well in life, and her heart was pure rose-incense and goodness. The knowing old Canon, too, lies buried there. Heavens, what an object he looked when I last saw him! *He was made up of nothing but mind and plasters*, and nevertheless studied day and night, as if he were alarmed lest the worms should find an idea too little in his head. And the little William lies there, and for this I am to blame. We were schoolfellows in the Franciscan monastery, and were playing on that side of it where the Rhine flows between stone walls, and I said—'William, fetch out the kitten that has just fallen in'—and merrily he went down on to the plank which lay across the brook, snatched the kitten out of the water, but fell in himself, and was dragged out dripping and dead. *The kitten lived to a good old age*. . . . Princes in that day were not the tormented race they are now; the crown grew firmly on their heads, and at night they drew a nightcap over it, and slept peacefully, and peacefully slept the people at their feet; and when the people waked in the morning, they said 'Good-morning, father!'—and the princes answered, 'Good-morning, dear children!' But it was suddenly quite otherwise; for when we awoke one morning at Düsseldorf, and were ready to say, 'Good-morning, father!'—lo! the father was gone away; and in the whole town there was nothing but dumb sorrow, everywhere a sort of funeral disposition; and people glided along silently to the market, and read the long placard placed on the door of the Town Hall. It was dismal weather;

yet the lean tailor, Kilian, stood in his nankeen jacket which he usually wore only in the house, and his blue worsted stockings hung down so that his naked legs peeped out mournfully, and his thin lips trembled while he muttered the announcement to himself. And an old soldier read rather louder, and at many a word a crystal tear trickled down to his brave old mustache. I stood near him and wept in company, and asked him, 'Why we wept?' He answered, 'The Elector has abdicated.' And then he read again, and at the words, 'for the long-manifested fidelity of my subjects,' and 'hereby set you free from your allegiance,' he wept more than ever. It is strangely touching to see an old man like that, with faded uniform and scarred face, weep so bitterly all of a sudden. While we were reading, the Electoral arms were taken down from the Town Hall; everything had such a desolate air, that it was as if an eclipse of the sun were expected. . . . I went home and wept, and wailed out, 'The Elector has abdicated!' In vain my mother took a world of trouble to explain the thing to me. I knew what I knew; I was not to be persuaded, but went crying to bed, and in the night dreamed that the world was at an end."

The next morning, however, the sun rises as usual, and Joachim Murat is proclaimed Grand Duke, whereupon there is a holiday at the public school, and Heinrich (or Harry, for that was his baptismal name, which he afterwards had the good taste to change), perched on the bronze horse of the Electoral statue, sees quite a different scene from yesterday's:—

"The next day the world was again all in order, and we had school as before, and things were got by heart as before—the Roman emperors, chronology, the nouns in *im*, the *verba irregularia*, Greek, Hebrew, geography, mental arithmetic!—heavens! my head is still dizzy with it,—all must be learned by heart! And a great deal of this came in very conveniently for me in after life. For if I had not known the Roman kings by heart, it would subsequently have been quite indifferent to me whether Niebuhr had proved or had not proved that they never really existed. . . . But oh! the trouble I had at school with the endless dates. And with arithmetic it was still worse. What I understood best was subtraction, for that has a very practical rule: 'Four can't be taken from three, therefore I must borrow one.' But I advise every one in such a case to borrow a few extra pence, for no one can tell what may happen. . . . As for Latin, you have no idea, madam, what a complicated affair it is. The Romans would never have found time to conquer the world if they had first had to learn Latin. Luckily for them, they already knew in their cradles what nouns have their accusative in *im*. I, on the contrary, had to learn them by heart in the sweat of my brow; nevertheless,

they crucify my good name; but I could never get on so far in Hebrew as my watch, which had much familiar intercourse with pawnbrokers, and in this way contracted many Jewish habits — for example, it wouldn't go on Saturdays."

Heine's parents were apparently not wealthy, but his education was cared for by his uncle, Solomon Heine, a great banker in Hamburg, so that he had no early pecuniary disadvantages to struggle with. He seems to have been very happy in his mother, who was not of Hebrew, but of Teutonic blood; he often mentions her with reverence and affection, and in the "*Buch der Lieder*" there are two exquisite sonnets addressed to her, which tell how his proud spirit was always subdued by the charm of her presence, and how her love was the home of his heart after restless weary wandering: —

"Wie mächtig auch mein stolzer Muth sich blähe,  
In deiner selig süßen, trauten Nähe  
Ergreift mich oft ein demuthvolle Zagen.

Und immer irrte ich nach Liebe, immer  
Nach Liebe, doch die Liebe fand ich nimmer,  
Und kehrte um nach Hause, krank und trübe.  
Doch da bist du entgegen mir gekommen,  
Und ach! was da in deinem Aug' geschwommen,  
Das war die süsse, langgesuchte Liebe."

He was at first destined for a mercantile life, but Nature declared too strongly against this plan. "God knows," he has lately said in conversation with his brother, "I would willingly have become a banker, but I could never bring myself to that pass. I very early discerned that bankers would one day be the rulers of the world." So commerce was at length given up for law, the study of which he began in 1819 at the University of Bonn. He had already published some poems in the corner of a newspaper, and among them was one on Napoleon, the object of his youthful enthusiasm. This poem, he says in a letter to St. René Taillandier, was written when he was only sixteen. It is still to be found in the "*Buch der Lieder*" under the title "*Die Grenadiere*," and it proves that even in its earliest efforts his genius showed a strongly specific character.

It will be easily imagined that the germs of poetry sprouted too vigorously in Heine's brain for jurisprudence to find much room there. Lectures on history and literature, we are told, were more diligently attended than lectures on law. He had taken care, too, to furnish his trunk with abundant editions

of the poets, and the poet he especially studied at that time was Byron. At a later period we find his taste taking another direction, for he writes: "Of all authors, Byron is precisely the one who excites in me the most intolerable emotion; whereas Scott, in every one of his works, gladdens my heart, soothes and invigorates me." Another indication of his bent in these Bonn days was a newspaper essay, in which he attacked the Romantic school; and here also he went through that chicken-pox of authorship — the production of a tragedy. Heine's tragedy — "Almansor" — is, as might be expected, better than the majority of these youthful mistakes. The tragic collision lies in the conflict between natural affection and the deadly hatred of religion and of race — in the sacrifice of youthful lovers to the strife between Moor and Spaniard, Moslem and Christian. Some of the situations are striking, and there are passages of considerable poetic merit; but the characters are little more than shadowy vehicles for the poetry, and there is a want of clearness and probability in the structure. It was published two years later, in company with another tragedy, in one act, called "William Ratcliffe," in which there is rather a feeble use of the Scotch second-sight after the manner of the Fate in the Greek tragedy. We smile to find Heine saying of his tragedies, in a letter to a friend soon after their publication: "I know they will be terribly cut up, but I will confess to you in confidence that they are very good, — better than my collection of poems, which are not worth a shot." Elsewhere he tells us, that when, after one of Paganini's concerts, he was passionately complimenting the great master on his violin-playing, Paganini interrupted him thus: "But how were you pleased with my *bows*?"

In 1820, Heine left Bonn for Göttingen. He there pursued his omission of law studies; and at the end of three months he was rusticated for a breach of the laws against duelling. While there, he had attempted a negotiation with Brockhaus for the printing of a volume of poems, and had endured that first ordeal of lovers and poets — a refusal. It was not until a year after, that he found a Berlin publisher for his first volume of poems, subsequently transformed, with additions, into the "*Buch der Lieder*." He remained between two and three years at Berlin, and the society he found there seems to have made these years an important epoch in his culture. He was one of the youngest members of a circle which assembled at the house of the poetess Elise von Hohenhausen, the translator of Byron — a circle which included Chamisso, Varn-

hagen, and Rahel (Varnhagen's wife). For Rahel, Heine had a profound admiration and regard. He afterwards dedicated to her the poems included under the title "*Heimkehr*;" and he frequently refers to her or quotes her in a way that indicates how he valued her influence. According to his friend, F. von Hohenhausen, the opinions concerning Heine's talent were very various among his Berlin friends, and it was only a small minority that had any presentiment of his future fame. In this minority was Elise von Hohenhausen, who proclaimed Heine as the Byron of Germany; but her opinion was met with much head-shaking and opposition. We can imagine how precious was such a recognition as hers to the young poet, then only two or three and twenty, and with by no means an impressive personality for superficial eyes. Perhaps even the deep-sighted were far from detecting in that small, blond, pale young man, with quiet, gentle manners, the latent powers of ridicule and sarcasm—the terrible talons that were one day to be thrust out from the velvet paw of the young leopard.

It was apparently during this residence in Berlin that Heine united himself with the Lutheran Church. He would willingly, like many of his friends, he tells us, have remained free from all ecclesiastical ties if the authorities there had not forbidden residence in Prussia, and especially in Berlin, to every one who did not belong to one of the positive religions recognized by the State:—

"As Henry IV. once laughingly said, '*Paris vaut bien une messe*,' so I might with reason say, '*Berlin vaut bien une prêche*;' and I could afterwards, as before, accommodate myself to the very enlightened Christianity, filtrated from all superstition, which could then be had in the churches of Berlin, and which was even free from the divinity of Christ, like turtle-soup without turtle."

At the same period, too, Heine became acquainted with Hegel. In his lately published "*Geständnisse*" (Confessions), he throws on Hegel's influence over him the blue light of demoniacal wit, and confounds us by the most bewildering, double-edged sarcasms; but that influence seems to have been at least more wholesome than the one which produced the mocking retractations of the "*Geständnisse*." Through all his self-satire, we discern that in those days he had something like real earnestness and enthusiasm, which are certainly not apparent in his present theistic confession of faith:—

"On the whole, I never felt a strong enthusiasm for this philosophy, and conviction on the subject was out of the question. I never was an abstract thinker, and I accepted the synthesis of the Hegelian doctrine without demanding any proof, since its consequences flattered my vanity. I was young and proud, and it pleased my vanity when I learned from Hegel that the true God was not, as my grandmother believed, the God who lives in heaven, but myself here upon earth. This foolish pride had not in the least a pernicious influence on my feelings; on the contrary, it heightened these to the pitch of heroism. I was at that time so lavish in generosity and self-sacrifice, that I must assuredly have eclipsed the most brilliant deeds of those good *bourgeois* of virtue who acted merely from a sense of duty, and simply obeyed the laws of morality."

His sketch of Hegel is irresistibly amusing; but we must warn the reader that Heine's anecdotes are often mere devices of style by which he conveys his satire or opinions. The reader will see that he does not neglect an opportunity of giving a sarcastic lash or two, in passing, to Meyerbeer, for whose music he has a great contempt. The sarcasm conveyed in the substitution of *reputation* for *music* and *journalists* for *musicians* might perhaps escape any one unfamiliar with the sly and unexpected turns of Heine's ridicule:—

"To speak frankly, I seldom understood him, and only arrived at the meaning of his words by subsequent reflection. I believe he wished not to be understood; and hence his practice of sprinkling his discourse with modifying parentheses; hence, perhaps, his preference for persons of whom he knew that they did not understand him, and to whom he all the more willingly granted the honor of his familiar acquaintance. Thus every one in Berlin wondered at the intimate companionship of the profound Hegel with the late Heinrich Beer, a brother of Giacomo Meyerbeer, who is universally known by his reputation, and who has been celebrated by the cleverest journalists. This Beer, namely Heinrich, was a thoroughly stupid fellow, and indeed was afterwards actually declared imbecile by his family, and placed under guardianship, because instead of making a name for himself in art or in science by means of his great fortune, he squandered his money on childish trifles; and, for example, one day bought six thousand thalers' worth of walking-sticks. This poor man, who had no wish to pass either for a great tragic dramatist, or for a great star-gazer, or for a laurel-crowned musical genius, a rival of Mozart and Rossini, and preferred giving his money for walking-sticks—this degenerate Beer enjoyed Hegel's most confidential society; he was the philosopher's bosom friend, his Pylades, and accompanied him everywhere like his shadow. The equally witty and gifted Felix Mendelssohn once sought to explain this phenomenon by maintaining that Hegel did not understand Heinrich Beer. I now believe, however, that the real ground of that intimacy consisted in this—Hegel was convinced that no word of what he said was understood by Heinrich Beer; and he could therefore, in his presence, give himself up to all the intellectual outpourings of the moment. In general, Hegel's conversation was a sort of monologue, sighed forth by starts in a noiseless voice: the odd roughness of his expressions often struck me, and many of them have remained in

my memory. One beautiful starlight evening we stood together at the window, and I, a young man of one and twenty, having just had a good dinner and finished my coffee, spoke with enthusiasm of the stars, and called them the habitations of the departed. But the master muttered to himself, 'The stars! hum! hum! The stars are only a brilliant leprosy on the face of the heavens.' 'For God's sake,' I cried, 'is there, then, no happy place above, where virtue is rewarded after death?' But he, staring at me with his pale eyes, said, cuttingly, 'So you want a bonus for having taken care of your sick mother, and refrained from poisoning your worthy brother?' At these words he looked anxiously round, but appeared immediately set at rest when he observed that it was only Heinrich Beer, who had approached to invite him to a game of whist."

In 1823, Heine returned to Göttingen to complete his career as a law-student, and this time he gave evidence of advanced mental maturity, not only by producing many of the charming poems subsequently included in the "*Reisebilder*," but also by prosecuting his professional studies diligently enough to leave Göttingen in 1825 as *Doctor juris*. Hereupon he settled at Hamburg as an advocate, but his profession seems to have been the least pressing of his occupations. In those days, a small blond young man, with the brim of his hat drawn over his nose, his coat flying open, and his hands stuck in his trouser-pockets, might be seen stumbling along the streets of Hamburg, staring from side to side, and appearing to have small regard to the figure he made in the eyes of the good citizens. Occasionally an inhabitant, more literary than usual, would point out this young man to his companion as *Heinrich Heine*; but in general, the young poet had not to endure the inconveniences of being a lion. His poems were devoured, but he was not asked to devour flattery in return. Whether because the fair Hamburgers acted in the spirit of Johnson's advice to Hannah More—to "consider what her flattery was worth before she choked him with it"—or for some other reason, Heine, according to the testimony of August Lewald, to whom we owe these particulars of his Hamburg life, was left free from the persecution of tea-parties. Not, however, from another persecution of genius—nervous headaches, which some persons, we are told, regarded as an improbable fiction, intended as a pretext for raising a delicate white hand to his forehead. It is probable that the sceptical persons alluded to were themselves untroubled with nervous headache, and that their hands were not delicate. Slight details these, but worth telling about a man of genius, because they help us to keep in mind that he is, after all, our brother, having to endure the petty every-day ills of life as we have; with this



difference, that his heightened sensibility converts what are mere insect-stings for us into scorpion-stings for him.

It was perhaps in these Hamburg days that Heine paid the visit to Goethe, of which he gives us this charming little picture:—

“When I visited him in Weimar, and stood before him, I involuntarily glanced at his side to see whether the eagle was not there with the lightning in his beak. I was nearly speaking Greek to him; but, as I observed that he understood German, I stated to him, in German, that the plums on the road between Jena and Weimar were very good. I had for so many long winter nights thought over what lofty and profound things I would say to Goethe, if ever I saw him. And when I saw him at last, I said to him, that the Saxon plums were very good! And Goethe smiled,”

During the next few years, Heine produced the most popular of all his works—those which have won him his place as the greatest of living German poets and humorists. Between 1826 and 1829 appeared the four volumes of the “*Reisebilder*” (Pictures of Travel), and the “*Buch der Leider*” (Book of Songs)—a volume of lyrics, of which it is hard to say whether their greatest charm is the lightness and finish of their style, their vivid and original imaginativeness, or their simple, pure sensibility. In his “*Reisebilder*,” Heine carries us with him to the Harz, to the isle of Norderney, to his native town Düsseldorf, to Italy, and to England, sketching scenery and character, now with the wildest, most fantastic humor, now with the finest idyllic sensibility,—letting his thoughts wander from poetry to politics, from criticism to dreamy reverie, and blending fun, imagination, reflection, and satire in a sort of exquisite, ever-varying shimmer, like the hues of the opal.

Heine’s journey to England did not at all heighten his regard for the English. He calls our language the “hiss of egoism” (*Zischlaute des Egoismus*); and his ridicule of English awkwardness is as merciless as—English ridicule of German awkwardness. His antipathy towards us seems to have grown in intensity, like many of his other antipathies; and in his ‘*Vermischte Schriften*’ he is more bitter than ever. Let us quote one of his philippics; since bitters are understood to be wholesome:—

“It is certainly a frightful injustice to pronounce sentence of condemnation on an entire people. But with regard to the English, momentary disgust might betray me into this injustice; and on looking at the mass, I easily forget the many brave and noble men who distinguished themselves by intellect and love of freedom. But these, especially the British

poets, were always all the more glaringly in contrast with the rest of the nation; they were isolated martyrs to their national relations; and besides, great geniuses do not belong to the particular land of their birth: they scarcely belong to this earth, the Golgotha of their sufferings. The mass — the English blockheads, God forgive me! — are hateful to me in my inmost soul; and I often regard them not at all as my fellow-men, but as miserable automata — machines, whose motive-power is egoism. In these moods, it seems to me as if I heard the whizzing wheel-work by which they think, feel, reckon, digest, and pray: their praying, their mechanical Anglican church-going, with the gilt Prayer-book under their arms, their stupid, tiresome Sunday, their awkward piety, is most of all odious to me. I am firmly convinced that a blaspheming Frenchman is a more pleasing sight for the Divinity than a praying Englishman."

On his return from England, Heine was employed at Munich in editing the *Allgemeinen Politischen Annalen*; but in 1830 he was again in the north, and the news of the July Revolution surprised him on the island of Heligoland. He has given us a graphic picture of his democratic enthusiasm in those days in some letters, apparently written from Heligoland, which he has inserted in his book on Börne. We quote some passages, not only for their biographic interest as showing a phase of Heine's mental history, but because they are a specimen of his power in that kind of dithyrambic writing which, in less masterly hands, easily becomes ridiculous: —

"The thick packet of newspapers arrived from the Continent with these warm, glowing-hot tidings. They were sunbeams wrapped up in packing-paper, and they inflamed my soul till it burst into the wildest conflagration. . . . It is all like a dream to me; especially the name Lafayette sounds to me like a legend out of my earliest childhood. Does he really sit again on horseback, commanding the National Guard? I almost fear it may not be true, for it is in print. I will myself go to Paris, to be convinced of it with my bodily eyes. . . . It must be splendid, when he rides through the streets, the citizen of two worlds, the god-like old man, with his silver locks streaming down his sacred shoulder. . . . He greets, with his dear old eyes, the grandchildren of those who once fought with him for freedom and equality. . . . It is now sixty years since he returned from America with the Declaration of Human Rights — the decalogue of the world's new creed, which was revealed to him amid the thunders and lightnings of cannon. . . . And the tri-colored flag waves again on the towers of Paris, and its streets resound with the *Marsellaise*! . . . It is all over with my yearning for repose. I know now again what I will do, what I ought to do, what I must do. . . . I am the son of the Revolution, and seize again the hallowed weapons on which my mother pronounced her magic benediction. . . . Flowers! flowers! I will crown my head for the death-fight. And the lyre too — reach me the lyre, that I may sing a battle-song. . . . Words like flaming stars, that shoot down from the heavens, and burn up the palaces, and illuminate the huts. . . . Words like bright javelins, that whirr up to the seventh heaven and strike the plous hypocrites who have skulked into

the Holy of Holies . . . I am all joy and song, all sword and flame ! Perhaps, too, all delirium. . . One of those sunbeams wrapped in brown paper has flown to my brain, and set my thoughts aglow. In vain I dip my head into the sea. No water extinguishes this Greek fire. . . Even the poor Heligolandiers shout for joy, although they have only a sort of dim instinct of what has occurred. The fisherman who yesterday took me over to the little sand island, which is the bathing-place here, said to me, smilingly, 'The poor people have won !' Yes ; instinctively the people comprehend such events — perhaps better than we, with all our means of knowledge. Thus Frau von Varnhagen once told me that when the issue of the battle of Leipzig was not yet known, the maid-servant suddenly rushed into the room, with the sorrowful cry, 'The nobles have won !' . . . This morning another packet of newspapers is come. I devour them like manna. Child that I am, affecting details touch me yet more than the momentous whole. Oh, if I could but see the 'dog Medor !' . . . The dog Medor brought his master his gun and cartridge-box, and when his master fell, and was buried with his fellow-heroes in the Court of the Louvre, there stayed the poor dog, like a monument of faithfulness, sitting motionless on the grave, day and night, eating but little of the food that was offered him — burying the greater part of it in the earth, perhaps as nourishment for his buried master !"

The enthusiasm which was kept thus at boiling-heat by imagination, cooled down rapidly when brought into contact with reality. In the same book he indicates, in his caustic way, the commencement of that change in his political *temperature* — for it cannot be called a change in opinion — which has drawn down on him immense vituperation from some of the patriotic party, but which seems to have resulted simply from the essential antagonism between keen wit and fanaticism : —

"On the very first days of my arrival in Paris, I observed that things were, in reality, quite different colors from those which had been shied on them, when in perspective, by the light of my enthusiasm. The silver locks which I saw fluttering so majestically on the shoulders of Lafayette, the hero of two worlds, were metamorphosed into a brown perriquet, which made a pitiable covering for a narrow skull. And even the dog Medor, which I visited in the Court of the Louvre, and which, encamped under tricolored flags and trophies, very quietly allowed himself to be fed — he was not at all the right dog, but quite an ordinary brute, who assumed to himself merits not his own, as often happens with the French ; and, like many others, he made a profit out of the glory of the Revolution. . . . He was paupered and patronized, perhaps promoted to the highest posts, while the true Medor, some days after the battle, modestly slunk out of sight, like the true people who created the Revolution."

That it was not merely interest in French politics which sent Heine to Paris in 1831, but also a perception that German air was not friendly to sympathizers in July revolutions, is humorously intimated in the "*Geständnisse* : " —

"I had done much and suffered much, and when the sun of the July Revolution arose in France, I had become very weary, and needed some recreation. Also, my native air was every day more unhealthy for me, and it was time I should seriously think of a change of climate. I had visions: the clouds terrified me, and made all sorts of ugly faces at me. It often seemed to me as if the sun were a Prussian cockade; at night I dreamed of a hideous black eagle, which gnawed my liver; and I was very melancholy. Add to this, I had become acquainted with an old Berlin Justizrath, who had spent many years in the fortress of Spandau, and he related to me how unpleasant it is when one is obliged to wear irons in winter. For myself I thought it very unchristian that the irons were not warmed a trifle. If the irons were warmed a little for us they would not make so unpleasant an impression, and even chilly natures might then bear them very well; it would be only proper consideration, too, if the fetters were perfumed with essence of roses and laurels, as is the case in this country (France). I asked my Justizrath whether he often got oysters to eat at Spandau? He said, No; Spandau was too far from the sea. Moreover, he said meat was very scarce there, and there was no kind of *volaille* except flies, which fell into one's soup. . . . Now, as I really needed some recreation, and as Spandau is too far from the sea for oysters to be got there, and the Spandau fly-soup did not seem very appetizing to me; as, besides all this, the Prussian chains are very cold in winter, and could not be conducive to my health, I resolved to visit Paris."

Since this time Paris has been Heine's home, and his best prose works have been written either to inform the Germans on French affairs or to inform the French on German philosophy and literature. He became a correspondent of the "*Allgemeine Zeitung*," and his correspondence, which extends, with an interruption of several years, from 1831 to 1844, forms the volume entitled "*Französische Zustände*" (French Affairs), and the second and third volumes of his "*Vermischte Schriften*." It is a witty and often wise commentary on public men and public events: Louis Philippe, Casimir Périer, Thiers, Guizot, Rothschild, the Catholic party, the Socialist party, have their turn of satire and appreciation, for Heine deals out both with an impartiality which made his less favorable critics — Börne, for example — charge him with the rather incompatible sins of reckless caprice and venality. Literature and art alternate with politics: we have now a sketch of George Sand, or a description of one of Horace Vernet's pictures, — now a criticism of Victor Hugo, or of Liszt, — now an irresistible caricature of Spontini, or Kalkbrenner, — and occasionally the predominant satire is relieved by a fine saying or a genial word of admiration. And all is done with that airy lightness, yet precision of touch, which distinguishes Heine beyond any living writer. The charge of venality was loudly made against Heine in Germany: first, it was said that he was paid to write;

then, that he was paid to abstain from writing; and the accusations were supposed to have an irrefragable basis in the fact that he accepted a stipend from the French Government. He has never attempted to conceal the reception of that stipend, and we think his statement (in the "*Vermischte Schriften*") of the circumstances under which it was offered and received, is a sufficient vindication of himself and M. Guizot from any dishonor in the matter.

It may be readily imagined that Heine, with so large a share of the Gallic element as he has in his composition, was soon at his ease in Parisian society, and the years here were bright with intellectual activity and social enjoyment. "His wit," wrote August Lewald, "is a perpetual gushing fountain; he throws off the most delicious descriptions with amazing facility, and sketches the most comic characters in conversation." Such a man could not be neglected in Paris, and Heine was sought on all sides — as a guest in distinguished *salons*, as a possible proselyte in the circle of the Saint Simonians. His literary productiveness seems to have been furthered by this congenial life, which, however, was soon to some extent embittered by the sense of exile; for since 1835 both his works and his person have been the object of denunciation by the German Governments. Between 1833 and 1845 appeared the four volumes of the "*Salon*," "*Die Romantische Schule*" (both written, in the first instance, in French); the book on Börne; "*Atta Troll*," a romantic poem; "*Deutschland*," an exquisitely humorous poem, describing his last visit to Germany, and containing some grand passages of serious writing; and the "*Neue Gedichte*," a collection of lyrical poems. Among the most interesting of his prose works are the second volume of the "*Salon*," which contains a survey of religion and philosophy in Germany, and the "*Romantische Schule*," a delightful introduction to that phase of German literature known as the Romantic School. The book on Börne, which appeared in 1840, two or three years after the death of that writer, excited great indignation in Germany, as a wreaking of vengeance on the dead, an insult to the memory of a man who had worked and suffered in the cause of freedom — a cause which was Heine's own. Börne, we may observe parenthetically, for the information of those who are not familiar with recent German literature, was a remarkable political writer of the ultra-liberal party in Germany, who resided in Paris at the same time as Heine, — a man of stern uncompromising partisanship, and bitter humor. Without justifying Heine's pro-

duction of this book, we see excuses for him which should temper the condemnation passed on it. There was a radical opposition of nature between him and Börne: to use his own distinction, Heine is a Hellene—sensuous, realistic, exquisitely alive to the beautiful; while Börne was a Nazarene—ascetic, spiritualistic, despising the pure artist as destitute of earnestness. Heine has too keen a perception of practical absurdities and damaging exaggerations ever to become a thorough-going partisan; and with a love of freedom, a faith in the ultimate triumph of democratic principles, of which we see no just reason to doubt the genuineness and consistency, he has been unable to satisfy more zealous and one-sided Liberals by giving his adhesion to their views and measures, or by adopting a denunciatory tone against those in the opposite ranks. Börne could not forgive what he regarded as Heine's epicurean indifference and artistic dalliance, and he at length gave vent to his antipathy in savage attacks on him through the press, accusing him of utterly lacking character and principle, and even of writing under the influence of venal motives. To these attacks Heine remained absolutely mute—from contempt, according to his own account; but the retort, which he resolutely refrained from making during Börne's life, comes in this volume published after his death with the concentrated force of long-gathering thunder. The utterly inexcusable part of the book is the caricature of Börne's friend, Madame Wohl, and the scurrilous insinuations concerning Börne's domestic life. It is said, we know not with how much truth, that Heine had to answer for these in a duel with Madame Wohl's husband, and that, after receiving a serious wound, he promised to withdraw the offensive matter from a future edition. That edition, however, has not been called for. Whatever else we may think of the book, it is impossible to deny its transcendent talent—the dramatic vigor with which Börne is made present to us, the critical acumen with which he is characterized, and the wonderful play of wit, pathos, and thought which runs through the whole. But we will let Heine speak for himself, and first we will give part of his graphic description of the way in which Börne's mind and manners grated on his taste:—

"To the disgust which, in intercourse with Börne, I was in danger of feeling towards those who surrounded him, was added the annoyance I felt from his perpetual talk about politics. Nothing but political argument, and again political argument, even at table, where he managed to hunt me out. At dinner, when I so gladly forget all the vexations of the

world, he spoiled the best dishes for me by his patriotic gall, which he poured as a bitter sauce over everything. Galf's feet, *à la maître d'hôtel*, then my innocent *bonne bouche*, he completely spoiled for me by Joh's tidings from Germany, which he scraped together out of the most unreliable newspapers. And then his accursed remarks, which spoiled one's appetit. . . . This was a sort of table-talk which did not greatly exhilarate me, and I avenged myself by affecting an excessive, almost impassioned indifference for the objects of Börne's enthusiasm. For example, Börne was indignant that immediately on my arrival in Paris, I had nothing better to do than to write for German papers a long account of the Exhibition of Pictures. I omit all discussion as to whether that interest in Art which induced me to undertake this work was so utterly irreconcilable with the revolutionary interests of the day; but Börne saw in it a proof of my indifference towards the sacred cause of humanity, and I could in my turn spoil the taste of his patriotic *Sauerkraut* for him by talking all dinner-time of nothing but pictures, of Robert's Reapers, Horace Vernet's Judith, and Scheffer's Faust. . . . That I never thought it worth while to discuss my political principles with him it is needless to say; and once when he declared that he had found a contradiction in my writings, I satisfied myself with the ironical answer, "You are mistaken, *mon cher*; such contradictions never occur in my works, for always before I begin to write I read over the statement of my political principles in my previous writings, that I may not contradict myself, and that no one may be able to reproach me with apostasy from my liberal principles."

And here is his own account of the spirit in which the book was written:—

"I was never Börne's friend, nor was I ever his enemy. The displeasure which he could often excite in me was never very important, and he atoned for it sufficiently by the cold silence which I opposed to all his accusations and raillery. While he lived I wrote not a line against him, I never thought about him, I ignored him completely; and that enraged him beyond measure. If I now speak of him, I do so neither out of enthusiasm nor out of uneasiness; I am conscious of the coolest impartiality. I write here neither an apology nor a critique, and as in painting the man I go on my own observation, the image I present of him ought perhaps to be regarded as a real portrait. And such a monument is due to him—to the great wrestler who, in the arena of our political games, wrestled so courageously, and earned, if not the laurel, certainly the crown of oak leaves. I give an image with his true features, without idealization—the more like him the more honorable for his memory. He was neither a genius nor a hero; he was no Olympian god. He was a man, a denizen of this earth; he was a good writer and a great patriot. . . . Beautiful delicious pesce, which I feel at this moment in the depths of my soul! thou rewardest me sufficiently for everything I have done and for everything I have despised. . . . I shall defend myself neither from the reproach of indifference nor from the suspicion of venality. I have for years, during the life of the insinuator, held such self-justification unworthy of me; now even decency demands silence. That would be a frightful spectacle!—polemics between Death and Exile! Dost thou stretch out to me a beseeching hand from the grave? Without rancor I reach mine towards thee. . . . See how noble it is and pure! It was never soiled by

pressing the hands of the mob, any more than by the impure gold of the people's enemy. In reality thou hast never injured me. . . . In all thy insinuations there is not a *louis-d'or's* word of truth."

In one of these years Heine was married, and, in deference to the sentiments of his wife, married according to the rites of the Catholic Church. On this fact busy rumor afterwards founded the story of his conversion to Catholicism, and could of course name the day and the spot on which he abjured Protestantism. In his "*Geständnisse*" Heine publishes a denial of this rumor; less, he says, for the sake of depriving the Catholics of the solace they may derive from their belief in a new convert, than in order to cut off from another party the more spiteful satisfaction of bemoaning his instability:—

"That statement of time and place was entirely correct. I was actually on the specified day in the specified church, which was, moreover, a Jesuit church—namely, St. Sulpice; and I then went through a religious act. But this act was no odious abjuration, but a very innocent conjugation; that is to say, my marriage, already performed according to the civil law, there received the ecclesiastical consecration, because my wife, whose family are staunch Catholics, would not have thought her marriage sacred enough without such a ceremony. And I would on no account cause this beloved being any uneasiness or disturbance in her religious views."

For sixteen years—from 1831 to 1847—Heine lived that rapid concentrated life which is known only in Paris; but then, alas! stole on the "days of darkness," and they were to be many. In 1847 he felt the approach of the terrible spinal disease which has for seven years chained him to his bed in acute suffering. The last time he went out of doors, he tells us, was in May 1848:—

"With difficulty I dragged myself to the Louvre, and I almost sank down as I entered the magnificent hall where the ever-blessed goddess of beauty, our beloved Lady of Milo, stands on her pedestal. At her feet I lay long, and wept so bitterly that a stone must have pitted me. The goddess looked compassionately on me, but at the same time disconsolately, as if she would say: Dost thou not see, then, that I have no arms, and thus cannot help thee?"

Since 1848, then, this poet, whom the lovely objects of Nature have always "haunted like a passion," has not descended from the second story of a Parisian house; this man of hungry intellect has been shut out from all direct observation of life, all contact with society, except such as is derived from visitors to his sick-room. The terrible nervous disease



has affected his eyes; the sight of one is utterly gone, and he can only raise the lid of the other by lifting it with his finger. Opium alone is the beneficent genius that stills his pain. We hardly know whether to call it an alleviation or an intensification of the torture that Heine retains his mental vigor, his poetic imagination, and his incisive wit; for if his intellectual activity fills up a blank, it widens the sphere of suffering. His brother described him in 1851 as still, in moments when the hand of pain was not too heavy on him, the same Heinrich Heine, poet and satirist by turns. In such moments, he would narrate the strangest things in the gravest manner. But when he came to an end, he would roguishly lift up the lid of his right eye with his finger to see the impression he had produced; and if his audience had been listening with a serious face, he would break into Homeric laughter. We have other proof than personal testimony that Heine's disease allows his genius to retain much of its energy, in the "Romanzero," a volume of poems published in 1851, and written chiefly during the first three years of his illness; and in the first volume of the "Vermischte Schriften," also the product of recent years. Very plaintive is the poet's own description of his condition, in the epilogue to the "Romanzero:"—

"Do I really exist? My body is so shrunken that I am hardly anything but a voice; and my bed reminds me of the singing grave of the magician Merlin, which lies in the forest of Brozelland, in Brittany, under tall oaks whose tops soar like green flames towards heaven. Alas! I envy thee those trees and the fresh breeze that moves their branches, brother Merlin, for no green leaf rustles about my mattress-grave in Paris, where early and late I hear nothing but the rolling of vehicles, hammering, quarrelling, and piano-strumming. A grave without repose, death without the privileges of the dead, who have no debts to pay, and need write neither letters nor books—that is a piteous condition. Long ago the measure has been taken for my coffin and for my necrology; but I die so slowly, that the process is tedious for me as well as my friends. But patience; everything has an end. You will one day find the booth closed where the puppet-show of my humor has so often delighted you."

As early as 1850, it was rumored that since Heine's illness a change had taken place in his religious views; and as rumor seldom stops short of extremes, it was soon said that he had become a thorough pietist, Catholics and Protestants by turns claiming him as a convert. Such a change in so uncompromising an iconoclast, in a man who had been so zealous in his negations as Heine, naturally excited considerable sensation in the camp he was supposed to have quitted, as well as in that he was supposed to have joined. In the second

volume of the "Salon" and in the "Romantische Schule," written in 1834 and '35, the doctrine of Pantheism is dwelt on with a fervor and unmixed seriousness which show that Pantheism was then an animating faith to Heine, and he attacks what he considers the false spiritualism and asceticism of Christianity as the enemy of true beauty in Art, and of social well-being. Now, however, it was said that Heine had recanted all his heresies; but from the fact that visitors to his sick-room brought away very various impressions as to his actual religious views, it seemed probable that his love of mystification had found a tempting opportunity for exercise on this subject, and that, as one of his friends said, he was not inclined to pour out unmixed wine to those who asked for a sample out of mere curiosity. At length, in the epilogue to the "Romanzero," dated 1851, there appeared, amidst much mystifying banter, a declaration that he had embraced Theism and the belief in a future life; and what chiefly lent an air of seriousness and reliability to this affirmation, was the fact that he took care to accompany it with certain negations:—

"As concerns myself, I can boast of no particular progress in politics; I adhered (after 1848) to the same democratic principles which had the homage of my youth, and for which I have ever since glowed with increasing fervor. In theology, on the contrary, I must accuse myself of retrogression, since, as I have already confessed, I returned to the old superstition—to a personal God. This fact is, once for all, not to be stifled, as many enlightened and well-meaning friends would fain have had it. But I must expressly contradict the report that my retrograde movement has carried me as far as to the threshold of a Church, and that I have even been received into her lap. No: my religious convictions and views have remained free from any tincture of ecclesiasticism; no chiming of bells has allured me, no altar-candles have dazzled me. I have dallied with no dogmas, and have not utterly renounced my reason."

This sounds like a serious statement. But what shall we say to a convert who plays with his newly acquired belief in a future life as Heine does in the very next page? He says to his reader:—

"Console thyself; we shall meet again in a better world, where I also mean to write thee better books. I take for granted that my health will there be improved, and that Swedenborg has not deceived me. He relates, namely, with great confidence, that we shall peacefully carry on our old occupations in the other world, just as we have done in this; that we shall there preserve our individuality unaltered, and that death will produce no particular change in our organic development. Swedenborg is a thoroughly honorable fellow, and quite worthy of credit in what he tells us about the other world, where he saw with his own eyes the

persons who had played a great part on our earth. Most of them, he says, remained unchanged, and busied themselves with the same things as formerly; they remained stationary, were old-fashioned, *rococo*—which now and then produced a ludicrous effect. For example, our dear Dr. Martin Luther kept fast by his doctrine of Grace, about which he had for three hundred years daily written down the same monidly arguments—just in the same way as the late Baron Ekstein, who during twenty years printed in the ‘*Allgemeine Zeitung*’ one and the same article, perpetually chewing over again the old cud of Jesuitical doctrine. But, as we have said, all persons who once figured here below were not found by Swedenborg in such a state of fossil immutability: many have considerably developed their character, both for good and evil, in the other world; and this gave rise to some singular results. Some who had been heroes and saints on earth had *there* sunk into scamps and good-for-nothings; and there were examples, too, of a contrary transformation. For instance, the fumes of self-conceit mounted to St. Anthony’s head when he learned what immenso veneration and adoration had been paid to him by all Christendom; and he who here below withstood the most terrible temptations, was now quite an importunate rascal and dissolute gallows-bird, who vied with his pig in rolling himself in the mud. The chaste Susanna, from having been excessively vain of her virtue, which she thought indomitable, came to a shameful fall, and she who once so gloriously resisted the two old men, was a victim to the seductions of the young Absalom, the son of David. On the contrary, Lot’s daughters had in the lapse of time become very virtuous, and passed in the other world for models of propriety: the old man, alas! had stuck to the wine-flask.”

In his “*Geständnisse*,” the retractation of former opinions and profession of Theism are renewed, but in a strain of irony that repels our sympathy and baffles our psychology. Yet what strange, deep pathos is mingled with the audacity of the following passage!—

“What avails it me, that enthusiastic youths and maidens crown my marble bust with laurel, when the withered hands of an aged nurse are pressing Spanish flies behind my ears? What avails it me, that all the roses of Shiraz glow and waft incense for me? Alas! Shiraz is two thousand miles from the Rue d’Amsterdam, where, in the wearisome loneliness of my sick-room, I get no scent except it be, perhaps, the perfume of warmed towels. Alas! God’s satire weighs heavily on me. The great Author of the universe, the Aristophanes of Heaven, was bent on demonstrating, with crushing force, to me, the little, earthly, German Aristophanes, how my wittiest sarcasms are only pitiful attempts at jesting in comparison with His, and how miserably I am beneath Him in humor, in colossal mockery.”

For our own part, we regard the paradoxical irreverence with which Heine professes his theoretical reverence as pathological, as the diseased exhibition of a predominant tendency urged into anomalous action by the pressure of pain and mental privation—as the delirium of wit starved of its proper

nourishment. It is not for us to condemn, who have never had the same burden laid on us; it is not for pygmies at their ease to criticise the writhings of the Titan chained to the rock.

On one other point we must touch before quitting Heine's personal history. There is a standing accusation against him in some quarters of wanting political principle, of wishing to denationalize himself, and of indulging in insults against his native country. Whatever ground may exist for these accusations, that ground is not, so far as we see, to be found in his writings. He may not have much faith in German revolutions and revolutionists; experience, in his case as in that of others, may have thrown his millennial anticipations into more distant perspective; but we see no evidence that he has ever swerved from his attachment to the principles of freedom, or written anything which to a philosophic mind is incompatible with true patriotism. He has expressly denied the report that he wished to become naturalized in France; and his yearning towards his native land and the accents of his native language is expressed with a pathos the more reliable from the fact that he is sparing in such effusions. We do not see why Heine's satire of the blunders and foibles of his fellow-countrymen should be denounced as the crime of *lèse-patrie*, any more than the political caricatures of any other satirist. The real offences of Heine are his occasional coarseness and his unscrupulous personalities, which are reprehensible, not because they are directed against his fellow-countrymen, but because they are *personalities*. That these offences have their precedents in men whose memory the world delights to honor, does not remove their turpitude, but it is a fact which should modify our condemnation in a particular case — unless, indeed, we are to deliver our judgments on a principle of compensation, making up for our indulgence in one direction by our severity in another. On this ground of coarseness and personality, a true bill may be found against Heine — not, we think, on the ground that he has laughed at what is laughable in his compatriots. Here is a specimen of the satire under which we suppose German patriots wince: —

"Rhenish Bavaria was to be the starting-point of the German revolution. Zweibrücken was the Bethlehem in which the infant Saviour — Freedom — lay in the cradle, and gave whimpering promise of redeeming the world. Near his cradle bellowed many an ox, who afterwards, when his horns were reckoned on, showed himself a very harmless brute. It was confidently believed that the German revolution would begin in Zweibrücken, and everything was there ripe for an outbreak. But, as

has been hinted, the tender-heartedness of some persons frustrated that illegal undertaking. For example, among the Bipontine conspirators there was a tremendous braggart, who was always loudest in his rage, who boiled over with the hatred of tyranny, and this man was fixed on to strike the first blow, by cutting down a sentinel who kept an important post. . . . 'What!' cried the man, when this order was given him — 'what! — me! Can you expect so horrible, so bloodthirsty an act of me? I — I, kill an innocent sentinel? I, who am father of a family! And this sentinel is perhaps also father of a family. One father of a family kill another father of a family? Yes! Kill — murder!'"

In political matters, Heine, like all men whose intellect and taste predominate too far over their impulses to allow of their becoming partisans, is offensive alike to the aristocrat and the democrat. By the one he is denounced as a man who holds incendiary principles, by the other as a half-hearted "trimmer." He has no sympathy, as he says, with "that vague, barren pathos, that useless effervescence of enthusiasm, which plunges, with the spirit of a martyr, into an ocean of generalities, and which always reminds me of the American sailor, who had so fervent an enthusiasm for General Jackson that he at last sprang from the top of a mast into the sea, crying, '*I die for General Jackson!*'"

"But thou liest, Brutus, thou liest, Cassius, and thou, too, liest, Asinius, in maintaining that my ridicule attacks those ideas which are the precious acquisition of Humanity, and for which I myself have so striven and suffered. Not for the very reason that those ideas constantly hover before the poet in glorious splendor and majesty, he is the more irresistibly overcome by laughter when he sees how rudely, awkwardly, and clumsily those ideas are seized and mirrored in the contracted minds of contemporaries. . . . There are mirrors which have so rough a surface that even an Apollo reflected in them becomes a caricature, and excites our laughter. *But we laugh then only at the caricature, not at the god.*"

For the rest, why should we demand of Heine that he should be a hero, a patriot, a solemn prophet, any more than we should demand of a gazelle that it should draw well in harness? Nature has not made him of her sterner stuff — not of iron and adamant, but of pollen of flowers, the juice of the grape, and Puck's mischievous brain, plentifully mixing also the dews of kindly affection and the gold-dust of noble thoughts. It is, after all, a *tribute* which his enemies pay him when they utter their bitterest dictum — namely, that he is "*nur Dichter*" — only a poet. Let us accept this point of view for the present, and, leaving all consideration of him as a man, look at him simply as a poet and literary artist.

Heine is essentially a lyric poet. The finest products of his genius are

"Short swallow-flights of song that dip  
Their wings in tears, and skim away;"

and they are so emphatically songs, that, in reading them, we feel as if each must have a twin melody born in the same moment and by the same inspiration. Heine is too impressible and mercurial for any sustained production: even in his short lyrics his tears sometimes pass into laughter, and his laughter into tears; and his longer poems, "*Atta Troll*" and "*Deutschland*," are full of Ariosto-like transitions. His song has a wide compass of notes: he can take us to the shores of the Northern Sea and thrill us by the sombre sublimity of his pictures and dreamy fancies; he can draw forth our tears by the voice he gives to our own sorrows, or to the sorrows of "*Poor Peter*;" he can throw a cold shudder over us by a mysterious legend, a ghost-story, or a still more ghastly rendering of hard reality; he can charm us by a quiet idyl, shake us with laughter at his overflowing fun, or give us a piquant sensation of surprise by the ingenuity of his transitions from the lofty to the ludicrous. This last power is not, indeed, essentially poetical; but only a poet can use it with the same success as Heine, for only a poet can poise our emotion and expectation at such a height as to give effect to the sudden fall. Heine's greatest power as a poet lies in his simple pathos, in the ever varied but always natural expression he has given to the tender emotions. We may perhaps indicate this phase of his genius by referring to Wordsworth's beautiful little poem, "*She dwelt among the untrodden ways*;" the conclusion —

"She dwelt alone, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be;  
But she is in her grave, and oh!  
The difference to me" —

is entirely in Heine's manner; and so is Tennyson's poem of a dozen lines, called "*Circumstance*." Both these poems have Heine's pregnant simplicity. But lest this comparison should mislead, we must say that there is no general resemblance between either Wordsworth, or Tennyson, and Heine. Their greatest qualities lie quite away from the light, delicate lucidity, the easy, rippling music, of Heine's style. The distinctive charm of his lyrics may best be seen by comparing

them with Goethe's. Both have the same masterly finished simplicity and rhythmic grace; but there is more thought mingled with Goethe's feeling — his lyrical genius is a vessel that draws more water than Heine's, and though it seems to glide along with equal ease, we have a sense of greater weight and force accompanying the grace of its movement. But, for this very reason, Heine touches our hearts more strongly; his songs are all music and feeling — they are like birds that not only enchant us with their delicious notes, but nestle against us with their soft breasts, and make us feel the agitated beating of their hearts. He indicates a whole sad history in a single quatrain: there is not an image in it, not a thought; but it is beautiful, simple, and perfect as a "big round tear" — it is pure feeling breathed in pure music: —

"Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen  
Und ich glaubt' ich trug es nie,  
Und ich hab' es doch getragen, —  
Aber fragt mich nur nicht, wie,"<sup>1</sup>

He excels equally in the more imaginative expression of feeling: he represents it by a brief image, like a finely cut cameo; he expands it into a mysterious dream, or dramatizes it in a little story, half ballad, half idyl; and in all these forms his art is so perfect, that we never have a sense of artificiality or of unsuccessful effort; but all seems to have developed itself by the same beautiful necessity that brings forth vine-leaves and grapes and the natural curls of childhood. Of Heine's humorous poetry, "Deutschland" is the most charming specimen — charming especially, because its wit and humor grow out of a rich loam of thought. "Atta Troll" is more original, more various, more fantastical; but it is too great a strain on the imagination to be a general favorite. We have said that feeling is the element in which Heine's poetic genius habitually floats; but he can occasionally soar to a higher region, and impart deep significance to picturesque symbolism; he can flash a sublime thought over the past and into the future; he can pour forth a lofty strain of hope or indignation. Few could forget, after once hearing them, the stanzas at the close of "Deutschland," in which he warns the King of Prussia not to incur the irredeemable hell which the injured poet can create for him — the *singing flames* of a Dante's *terza rima*!

<sup>1</sup> At first I was almost in despair, and I thought I could never bear it, and yet I have borne it — only do not ask me *how*?

“Kennst du die Hölle des Dante nicht,  
Die schrecklichen Terzatten ?  
Wen da der Dichter hineingesperrt  
Den kann kein Gott mehr retten.

Kein Gott, kein Helland, erlöst ihn je  
Aus diesen singenden flammen !  
Nimm dich in Acht, das wir dich nicht  
Zu solcher Hölle verdammen.”<sup>1</sup>

As a prosaist, Heine is, in one point of view, even more distinguished than as a poet. The German language easily lends itself to all the purposes of poetry; like the ladies of the Middle Ages, it is gracious and compliant to the Troubadours. But as these same ladies were often crusty and repulsive to their unmusical mates, so the German language generally appears awkward and unmanageable in the hands of prose writers. Indeed the number of really fine German prosaists before Heine would hardly have exceeded the numbering powers of a New Hollander, who can count three and no more. Persons the most familiar with German prose testify that there is an extra fatigue in reading it, just as we feel an extra fatigue from our walk when it takes us over a ploughed clay. But in Heine's hands German prose, usually so heavy, so clumsy, so dull, becomes, like clay in the hands of the chemist, compact, metallic, brilliant; it is German in an *allotropic* condition. No dreary, labyrinthine sentences in which you find “no end in wandering mazes lost;” no chains of adjective in linked harshness long drawn out; no digressions thrown in as parentheses; but crystalline definiteness and clearness, fine and varied rhythm, and all that delicate precision, all those felicities of word and cadence, which belong to the highest order of prose. And Heine has proved — what Madame de Staël seems to have doubted — that it is possible to be witty in German; indeed, in reading him, you might imagine that German was pre-eminently the language of wit, so flexible, so subtle, so piquant does it become under his management. He is far more an artist in prose than Goethe. He has not the breadth and repose, and the calm development

<sup>1</sup> It is not fair to the English reader to indulge in German quotations, but in our opinion poetical translations are usually worse than valueless. For those who think differently, however, we may mention that Mr. Storey Smith has published a modest little book, containing “Selections from the Poetry of Heinrich Heine,” and that a meritorious (American) translation of Heine's complete works, by Charles Leland, is now appearing in shilling numbers.



which belong to Goethe's style, for they are foreign to his mental character; but he excels Goethe in susceptibility to the manifold qualities of prose, and in mastery over its effects. Heine is full of variety, of light and shadow: he alternates between epigrammatic pith, imaginative grace, sly allusion, and daring piquancy; and athwart all these there runs a vein of sadness, tenderness, and grandeur which reveals the poet. He continually throws out those finely chiselled sayings which stamp themselves on the memory, and become familiar by quotation. For example: "The People have time enough, they are immortal: kings only are mortal." "Wherever a great soul utters its thoughts, there is Golgotha." "Nature wanted to see how she looked, and she created Goethe." "Only the man who has known bodily suffering is truly a *man*; his limbs have their Passion-history, they are spiritualized." He calls Rubens "this Flemish Titan, the wings of whose genius were so strong that he soared as high as the sun, in spite of the hundred-weight of Dutch cheeses that hung on his legs." Speaking of Börne's dislike to the calm creations of the true artist, he says, "He was like a child which, insensible to the glowing significance of a Greek statue, only touches the marble and complains of cold."

The most poetic and specifically humorous of Heine's prose writings are the "Reisebilder." The comparison with Sterne is inevitable here; but Heine does not suffer from it, for if he falls below Sterne in raciness of humor, he is far above him in poetic sensibility, and in reach and variety of thought. Heine's humor is never persistent, it never flows on long in easy gaiety and drollery; where it is not swelled by the tide of poetic feeling, it is continually dashing down the precipices of a witticism. It is not broad and unctuous; it is aerial and sprite-like, a momentary resting-place between his poetry and his wit. In the "Reisebilder" he runs through the whole gamut of his powers, and gives us every hue of thought, from the wildly droll and fantastic to the sombre and the terrible. Here is a passage almost Dantesque in its conception:—

"Alas! one ought in truth to write against no one in this world. Each of us is sick enough in this great *lazaretto*, and many a polemical writing reminds me involuntarily of a revolting quarrel, in a little hospital at Cracow, of which I chanced to be a witness, and where it was horrible to hear how the patients mockingly reproached each other with their infirmities: how one who was wasted by consumption jeered at another who was bloated by dropsy; how one laughed at another's cancer in the nose, and this one again at his neighbor's locked-jaw or squint,

until at last the delirious fever-patient sprang out of bed and tore away the coverings from the wounded bodies of his companions, and nothing was to be seen but hideous misery and mutilation."

And how fine is the transition in the very next chapter where, after quoting the Homeric description of the feasting gods, he says :—

"Then suddenly approached, panting, a pale Jew, with drops of blood on his brow, with a crown of thorns on his head, and a great cross laid on his shoulders; and he threw the cross on the high table of the gods, so that the golden cups tottered, and the gods became dumb and pale, and grew even paler, till they at last melted away into vapor."

The richest specimens of Heine's wit are perhaps to be found in the works which have appeared since the "Reisebilder." The years, if they have intensified his satirical bitterness, have also given his wit a finer edge and polish. His sarcasms are so subtly prepared and so slyly allusive, that they may often escape readers whose sense of wit is not very acute; but for those who delight in the subtle and delicate flavors of style, there can hardly be any wit more irresistible than Heine's. We may measure its force by the degree in which it has subdued the German language to its purposes, and made that language brilliant in spite of a long hereditary transmission of dulness. As one of the most harmless examples of his satire, take this on a man who has certainly had his share of adulation :—

"Assuredly it is far from my purpose to deprecate M. Victor Cousin. The titles of this celebrated philosopher even lay me under an obligation to praise him. He belongs to that living pantheon of France, which we call the peerage, and his intelligent legs rest on the velvet benches of the Luxembourg. I must indeed sternly repress all private feelings which might seduce me into an excessive enthusiasm. Otherwise I might be suspected of servility; for M. Cousin is very influential in the State by means of his position and his tongue. This consideration might even move me to speak of his faults as frankly as of his virtues. Will he himself disprove of this? Assuredly not. I know that we cannot do higher honor to great minds than when we throw as strong a light on their demerits as on their merits. When we sing the praises of a Hercules, we must also mention that he once laid aside the lion's skin and sat down to the distaff: what then? he remains notwithstanding a Hercules! So when we relate similar circumstances concerning M. Cousin, we must nevertheless add, with discriminating eulogy: *M. Cousin, if he has sometimes sat twaddling at the distaff, has never laid aside the lion's skin.* . . . It is true that, having been suspected of demagoguery, he spent some time in a German prison, just as Lafayette and Richard Cœur de Lion. But that M. Cousin there in his leisure hours studied Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' is to be doubted on three grounds. First, this book is

written in German. Secondly, in order to read this book, a man must understand German. Thirdly, M. Cousin does not understand German. . . . I fear I am passing unawares from the sweet waters of praise into the bitter ocean of blame. Yes, on one account I cannot refrain from bitterly blaming M. Cousin — namely, that he who loves truth far more than he loves Plato and Tenneman, is unjust to himself when he wants to persuade us that he has borrowed something from the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel. Against this self-accusation, I must take M. Cousin under my protection. On my word and conscience! this honorable man has not stolen a jot from Schelling and Hegel, and if he brought home anything of theirs, it was merely their friendship. That does honor to his heart. But there are many instances of such false self-accusation in psychology. I knew a man who declared that he had stolen silver spoons at the king's table; and yet we all knew that the poor devil had never been presented at Court, and accused himself of stealing these spoons to make us believe that he had been a guest at the palace. Not in German philosophy M. Cousin has always kept the sixth commandment; here he has never pocketed a single idea, not so much as a salt-spoon of an idea. All witnesses agree in attesting that in this respect M. Cousin is honest himself. . . . I prophesy to you that the renown of M. Cousin, like the French Revolution, will go round the world! I hear some one wickedly add: Undeniably the renown of M. Cousin is going round the world, and it has already taken its departure from France."

The following "symbolical myth" about Louis Philippe is very characteristic of Heine's manner: —

"I remember very well that immediately on my arrival [in Paris] I hastened to the Palais Royal to see Louis Philippe. The friend who conducted me told me that the king now appeared on the terrace only at stated hours, but that formerly he was to be seen at any time for five francs. 'For five francs!' I cried, with amazement; 'does he then show himself for money?' 'No; but he is shown for money, and it happens in this way: there is a society of *claqueurs*, *marchands de contre-marches*, and such riff-raff, who offered every foreigner to show him the king for five francs: if he would give ten francs, he might see the king raise his eyes to heaven, and lay his hand protestingly on his heart; if he would give twenty francs, the king would sing the *Marseillaise*. If the foreigner gave five francs, they raised a loud cheering under the king's windows, and his Majesty appeared on the terrace, bowed, and retired. If ten francs, they shouted still louder, and gesticulated as if they had been possessed, when the king appeared, who then, as a sign of silent emotion, raised his eyes to heaven, and laid his hand on his heart. English visitors, however, would sometimes spend as much as twenty francs, and then the enthusiasm mounted to the highest pitch: no sooner did the king appear on the terrace, than the *Marseillaise* was struck up and roared out frightfully, until Louis Philippe, perhaps only for the sake of putting an end to the singing, bowed, laid his hand on his heart, and joined in the *Marseillaise*. Whether, as is asserted, he beat time with his foot, I cannot say."

## EVANGELICAL TEACHING: DR. CUMMING.

GIVEN, a man with moderate intellect, a moral standard not higher than the average, some rhetorical affluence and great glibness of speech, what is the career in which, without the aid of birth or money, he may most easily attain power and reputation in English society? Where is that Goshen of mediocrity in which a smattering of science and learning will pass for profound instruction, where platitudes will be accepted as wisdom, bigoted narrowness as holy zeal, unctuous egoism as God-given piety? Let such a man become an evangelical preacher; he will then find it possible to reconcile small ability with great ambition, superficial knowledge with the prestige of erudition, a middling morale with a high reputation for sanctity. Let him shun practical extremes and be ultra only in what is purely theoretic: let him be stringent on predestination, but latitudinarian on fasting; unflinching in insisting on the eternity of punishment, but diffident of curtailing the substantial comforts of time; ardent and imaginative on the premillennial advent of Christ, but cold and cautious towards every other infringement of the *status quo*. Let him fish for souls not with the bait of inconvenient singularity, but with the drag-net of comfortable conformity. Let him be hard and literal in his interpretation only when he wants to hurl texts at the heads of unbelievers and adversaries, but when the letter of the Scriptures presses too closely on the genteel Christianity of the nineteenth century, let him use his spiritualizing alembic and disperse it into impalpable ether. Let him preach less of Christ than of Antichrist; let him be less definite in showing what sin is than in showing who is the Man of Sin, less expansive on the blessedness of faith than on the accursedness of infidelity. Above all, let him set up as an interpreter of prophecy, and rival Moore's Almanack in the prediction of political events, tickling the interests of hearers who are but moderately spiritual by showing how the Holy Spirit has dictated problems and charades for their benefit, and how, if they are ingenious enough to solve these, they may have their Christian graces nourished

by learning precisely to whom they may point as the "horn that had eyes," "the lying prophet," and the "unclean spirits." In this way he will draw men to him by the strong cords of their passions, made reason-proof by being baptized with the name of piety. In this way he may gain a metropolitan pulpit; the avenues to his church will be as crowded as the passages to the opera; he has but to print his prophetic sermons and bind them in lilac and gold, and they will adorn the drawing-room table of all evangelical ladies, who will regard as a sort of pious "light reading" the demonstration that the prophecy of the locusts whose sting is in their tail, is fulfilled in the fact of the Turkish commander's having taken a horse's tail for his standard, and that the French are the very frogs predicted in the Revelation.

Pleasant to the clerical flesh under such circumstances is the arrival of Sunday! Somewhat at a disadvantage during the week, in the presence of working-day interests and lay splendors, on Sunday the preacher becomes the cynosure of a thousand eyes, and predominates at once over the Amphitryon with whom he dines, and the most captious member of his church or vestry. He has an immense advantage over all other public speakers. The platform orator is subject to the criticism of hisses and groans. Council for the plaintiff expects the retort of council for the defendant. The honorable gentleman on one side of the House is liable to have his facts and figures shown up by his honorable friend on the opposite side. Even the scientific or literary lecturer, if he is dull or incompetent, may see the best part of his audience slip quietly out one by one. But the preacher is completely master of the situation: no one may hiss, no one may depart. Like the writer of imaginary conversations, he may put what imbecilities he pleases into the mouths of his antagonists, and swell with triumph when he has refuted them. He may riot in gratuitous assertions, confident that no man will contradict him; he may exercise perfect free-will in logic, and invent illustrative experience; he may give an evangelical edition of history with the inconvenient facts omitted; — all this he may do with impunity, certain that those of his hearers who are not sympathizing are not listening. For the Press has no band of critics who go the round of the churches and chapels, and are on the watch for a slip or defect in the preacher, to make a "feature" in their article: the clergy are, practically, the most irresponsible of all talkers. For this reason, at least, it is well that they do not always allow their discourses to be

merely fugitive, but are often induced to fix them in that black and white in which they are open to the criticism of any man who has the courage and patience to treat them with thorough freedom of speech and pen.

It is because we think this criticism of clerical teaching desirable for the public good, that we devote some pages to Dr. Cumming. He is, as every one knows, a preacher of immense popularity, and of the numerous publications in which he perpetuates his pulpit labors, all circulate widely, and some, according to their title-page, have reached the sixteenth thousand. Now our opinion of these publications is the very opposite of that given by a newspaper eulogist: we do not "believe that the repeated issues of Dr. Cumming's thoughts are having a beneficial effect on society," but the reverse; and hence, little inclined as we are to dwell on his pages, we think it worth while to do so, for the sake of pointing out in them what we believe to be profoundly mistaken and pernicious. Of Dr. Cumming personally we know absolutely nothing: our acquaintance with him is confined to a perusal of his works; our judgment of him is founded solely on the manner in which he has written himself down on his pages. We know neither how he looks nor how he lives. We are ignorant whether, like St. Paul, he has a bodily presence that is weak and contemptible, or whether his person is as florid and as prone to amplification as his style. For aught we know, he may not only have the gift of prophecy, but may bestow the profits of all his works to feed the poor, and be ready to give his own body to be burned with as much alacrity as he infers the everlasting burning of Roman Catholics and Puseyites. Out of the pulpit he may be a model of justice, truthfulness, and the love that thinketh no evil; but we are obliged to judge of his charity by the spirit we find in his sermons, and shall only be glad to learn that his practice is, in many respects, an amiable *non sequitur* from his teaching.

Dr Cumming's mind is evidently not of the pietistic order. There is not the slightest leaning towards mysticism in his Christianity — no indication of religious raptures, of delight in God, of spiritual communion with the Father. He is most at home in the forensic view of Justification, and dwells on salvation as a scheme rather than as an experience. He insists on good works as the sign of justifying faith, as labors to be achieved to the glory of God, but he rarely represents them as the spontaneous, necessary outflow of a soul

filled with Divine love. He is at home in the external, the polemical, the historical, the circumstantial, and is only episodically devout and practical. The great majority of his published sermons are occupied with argument or philippic against Romanists and unbelievers, with "vindications" of the Bible, with the political interpretation of prophecy, or the criticism of public events; and the devout aspiration, or the spiritual and practical exhortation, is tacked to them as a sort of fringe in a hurried sentence or two at the end. He revels in the demonstration that the Pope is the Man of Sin; he is copious on the downfall of the Ottoman empire; he appears to glow with satisfaction in turning a story which tends to show how he abashed an "infidel;" it is a favorite exercise with him to form conjectures of the process by which the earth is to be burned up, and to picture Dr. Chalmers and Mr. Wilberforce being caught up to meet Christ in the air, while Romanists, Puseyites, and infidels are given over to gnashing of teeth. But of really spiritual joys and sorrows, of the life and death of Christ as a manifestation of love that constrains the soul, of sympathy with that yearning over the lost and erring which made Jesus weep over Jerusalem, and prompted the sublime prayer, "Father, forgive them," of the gentler fruits of the Spirit, and the peace of God which passeth understanding — of all this, we find little trace in Dr. Cumming's discourses.

His style is in perfect correspondence with this habit of mind. Though diffuse, as that of all preachers must be, it has rapidity of movement, perfect clearness, and some aptness of illustration. He has much of that literary talent which makes a good journalist — the power of beating out an idea over a large space, and of introducing far-fetched *à propos*. His writings have, indeed, no high merit: they have no originality or force of thought, no striking felicity of presentation, no depth of emotion. Throughout nine volumes we have alighted on no passage which impressed us as worth extracting and placing among the "beauties" of evangelical writers, such as Robert Hall, Foster the Essayist, or Isaac Taylor. Everywhere there is commonplace cleverness, nowhere a spark of rare thought, of lofty sentiment, or pathetic tenderness. We feel ourselves in company with a voluble retail talker, whose language is exuberant but not exact, and to whom we should never think of referring for precise information, or for well-digested thought and experience. His argument continually slides into wholesale assertion and vague

declamation, and in his love of ornament he frequently becomes tawdry. For example, he tells us (Apoc. Sketches, p. 265) that "Botany weaves around the cross her amaranthine garlands; and Newton comes from his starry home—Linnaeus from his flowery resting-place—and Werner and Hutton from their subterranean graves at the voice of Chalmers, to acknowledge that all they learned and elicited in their respective provinces has only served to show more clearly that Jesus of Nazareth is enthroned on the riches of the universe." And so prosaic an injunction to his hearers as that they should choose a residence within an easy distance of church, is magnificently draped by him as an exhortation to prefer a house "that basks in the sunshine of the countenance of God." Like all preachers of his class, he is more fertile in imaginative paraphrase than in close exposition, and in this way he gives us some remarkable fragments of what we may call the romance of Scripture, filling up the outline of the record with an elaborate coloring quite undreamed of by more literal minds. The serpent, he informs us, said to Eve, "Can it be so? Surely you are mistaken, that God hath said you shall die, a creature so fair, so lovely, so beautiful. It is impossible. *The laws of nature and physical science tell you that my interpretation is correct*; you shall not die. I can tell you by my own experience as an angel that you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."—(Apoc. Sketches, p. 294.) Again, according to Dr. Cumming, Abel had so clear an idea of the Incarnation and Atonement, that when he offered his sacrifice "he must have said, 'I feel myself a guilty sinner, and that in myself I cannot meet Thee alive; I lay on Thine altar this victim, and I shed its blood as my testimony that mine should be shed; and I look for forgiveness and undeserved mercy through Him who is to bruise the serpent's head, and whose atonement this typifies.'"—(Occas. Disc., vol. i. p. 23.) Indeed his productions are essentially ephemeral; he is essentially a journalist, who writes sermons instead of leading articles, who, instead of venting diatribes against her Majesty's Ministers, directs his power of invective against Cardinal Wiseman and the Puseyites,—instead of declaiming on public spirit, perorates on the "glory of God." We fancy he is called, in the more refined evangelical circles, an "intellectual preacher;" by the plainer sort of Christians, a flowery preacher;" and we are inclined to think that the more spiritually minded class of believers, who look with greater anxiety for the kingdom of God within them than for the visible ad-



vent of Christ in 1864, will be likely to find Dr. Cumming's declamatory flights and historico-prophetical exertations as little better than "clouts o' could parritch."

Such is our general impression from his writings after an attentive perusal. There are some particular characteristics which we shall consider more closely, but in doing so we must be understood as altogether declining any doctrinal discussion. We have no intention to consider the grounds of Dr. Cumming's dogmatic system, to examine the principles of his prophetic exegesis, or to question his opinion concerning the little horn, the river Euphrates, or the seven vials. We identify ourselves with no one of the bodies whom he regards it as his special mission to attack: not giving adhesion either to Romanism, to Puseyism, or to that anomalous combination of opinions which he introduces to us under the name of infidelity. It is simply as spectators that we criticise Dr. Cumming's mode of warfare: as spectators concerned less with what he holds to be Christian truth than with his manner of enforcing that truth, less with the doctrines he teaches than with the moral spirit and tendencies of his teaching.

One of the most striking characteristics of Dr. Cumming's writings is *unscrupulosity of statement*. His motto apparently is, *Christianitatem, quocunque modo, Christianitatem*; and the only system he includes under the term Christianity is Calvinistic Protestantism. Experience has so long shown that the human brain is a congenial nidus for inconsistent beliefs, that we do not pause to inquire how Dr. Cumming, who attributes the conversion of the unbelieving to the Divine Spirit, can think it necessary to co-operate with that Spirit by argumentative white lies. Nor do we for a moment impugn the genuineness of his zeal for Christianity, or the sincerity of his conviction that the doctrines he preaches are necessary to salvation; on the contrary, we regard the *flagrant unverity* found on his pages as an indirect result of that conviction — as a result, namely, of the intellectual and moral distortion of view which is inevitably produced by assigning to dogmas, based on a very complex structure of evidence, the place and authority of first truths. A distinct appreciation of the value of evidence — in other words, the intellectual perception of truth — is more closely allied to truthfulness of statement, or the moral quality of veracity, than is generally admitted. That highest moral habit, the constant preference of truth, both theoretically and practically, pre-eminently demands the co-operation of the intellect with the impulses — as is indi-

cated by the fact that it is only found in anything like completeness in the highest class of minds. And it is commonly seen that, in proportion as religious sects believe themselves to be guided by direct inspiration rather than by a spontaneous exertion of their faculties, their sense of truthfulness is misty and confused. No one can have talked to the more enthusiastic Methodists and listened to their stories of miracles without perceiving that they require no other passport to a statement than that it accords with their wishes and their general conception of God's dealings; nay, they regard as a symptom of sinful scepticism an inquiry into the evidence for a story which they think unquestionably tends to the glory of God, and in retelling such stories, new particulars, further tending to His glory, are "borne in" upon their minds. Now, Dr. Cumming, as we have said, is no enthusiastic pietist: within a certain circle — within the mill of evangelical orthodoxy — his intellect is perpetually at work; but that principle of sophistication which our friends the Methodists derive from the predominance of their pietistic feelings, is involved for him in the doctrine of verbal inspiration; what is for them a state of emotion submerging the intellect, is with him a formula imprisoning the intellect, depriving it of its proper function — the free search for truth — and making it the mere servant-of-all-work to a foregone conclusion. Minds fettered by this doctrine no longer inquire concerning a proposition whether it is attested by sufficient evidence, but whether it accords with Scripture; they do not search for facts, as such, but for facts that will bear out their doctrine. They become accustomed to reject the more direct evidence in favor of the less direct, and where adverse evidence reaches demonstration they must resort to devices and expedients in order to explain away contradiction. It is easy to see that this mental habit blunts not only the perception of truth, but the sense of truthfulness, and that the man whose faith drives him into fallacies, treads close upon the precipice of falsehood.

We have entered into this digression for the sake of mitigating the inference that is likely to be drawn from that characteristic of Dr. Cumming's works to which we have pointed. He is much in the same intellectual condition as that professor of Padua, who, in order to disprove Galileo's discovery of Jupiter's satellites, urged that as there were only seven metals there could not be more than seven planets — a mental condition scarcely compatible with candor. And we may well suppose that if the professor had held the belief in seven planets,

and no more, to be a necessary condition of salvation, his mental vision would have been so dazed that even if he had consented to look through Galileo's telescope, his eyes would have reported in accordance with his inward alarms rather than with the external fact. So long as a belief in propositions is regarded as indispensable to salvation, the pursuit of truth *as such* is not possible, any more than it is possible for a man who is swimming for his life to make meteorological observations on the storm which threatens to overwhelm him. The sense of alarm and haste, the anxiety for personal safety, which Dr. Cumming insists upon as the proper religious attitude, unmans the nature, and allows no thorough, calm thinking, no truly noble, disinterested feeling. Hence, we by no means suspect that the unscrupulosity of statement with which we charge Dr. Cumming, extends beyond the sphere of his theological prejudices: religion apart, he probably appreciates and practises veracity.

A grave general accusation must be supported by details, and in adducing these, we purposely select the most obvious cases of misrepresentation — such as require no argument to expose them, but can be perceived at a glance. Among Dr. Cumming's numerous books, one of the most notable for unscrupulosity of statement is the "Manual of Christian Evidences," written, as he tells us in his Preface, not to give the deepest solutions of the difficulties in question, but to furnish Scripture-readers, city missionaries, and Sunday-school teachers with a "ready reply" to sceptical arguments. This announcement that *readiness* was the chief quality sought for in the solutions here given, modifies our inference from the other qualities which those solutions present; and it is but fair to presume, that when the Christian disputant is not in a hurry, Dr. Cumming would recommend replies less ready and more veracious. Here is an example of what in another place<sup>1</sup> he tells his readers is "change in their pocket, . . . a little ready argument which they can employ, and therewith answer a fool according to his folly." From the nature of this argumentative small-coin, we are inclined to think Dr. Cumming understands answering a fool according to his folly to mean, giving him a foolish answer. We quote from the "Manual of Christian Evidences," p. 62: —

"Some of the gods which the heathen worshipped were among the greatest monsters that ever walked the earth. Mercury was a thief; and because he was an expert thief he was enrolled among the gods. Bac-

chus was a mere sensualist and drunkard; and therefore he was enrolled among the gods. Venus was a dissipated and abandoned courtesan; and therefore she was enrolled among the goddesses. Mars was a savage, that gloried in battle and in blood; and therefore he was deified and enrolled among the gods."

Does Dr. Cumming believe the purport of these sentences? If so, this passage is worth handing down as his theory of the Greek myth—as a specimen of the astounding ignorance which was possible in a metropolitan preacher A.D. 1854. And if he does not believe them . . . The inference must then be, that he thinks delicate veracity about the ancient Greeks is not a Christian virtue, but only a "splendid sin" of the unregenerate. This inference is rendered the more probable by our finding, a little further on, that he is not more scrupulous about the moderns, if they come under his definition of "Infidels." But the passage we are about to quote in proof of this has a worse quality than its discrepancy with fact. Who that has a spark of generous feeling, that rejoices in the presence of good in a fellow-being, has not dwelt with pleasure on the thought that Lord Byron's unhappy career was ennobled and purified towards its close by a high and sympathetic purpose, by honest and energetic efforts for his fellow-men? Who has not read with deep emotion those last pathetic lines, beautiful as the after-glow of sunset, in which love and resignation are mingled with something of a melancholy heroism. Who has not lingered with compassion over the dying scene at Missolonghi—the sufferer's inability to make his farewell messages of love intelligible, and the last long hours of silent pain? Yet for the sake of furnishing his disciples with a "ready reply," Dr. Cumming can prevail on himself to inoculate them with a bad-spirited falsity like the following:—

"We have one striking exhibition of an *infidel's* brightest thoughts, in some lines written in his dying moments by a man, gifted with great genius, capable of prodigious intellectual prowess, but of worthless principle, and yet more worthless practices—I mean the celebrated Lord Byron. He says,—

" 'Though gay companions o'er the bowl  
Dispel awhile the sense of ill,  
Though pleasure fills the maddening soul,  
The heart—the heart is lonely still.

AY, but to die, and go, alas!  
Where all have gone and all must go;  
To be the *Nothing* that I was,  
Ere born to life and living woe!

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,  
 Count o'er thy days from anguish free,  
 And know, whatever thou hast been,  
 'Tis *something better* not to be.

Nay, for myself, so dark my fate  
 Through every turn of life hath been,  
*Man and the world so much I hate,*  
 I care not when I quit the scene."

It is difficult to suppose that Dr. Cumming can have been so grossly imposed upon — that he can be so ill-informed as really to believe that these lines were "written" by Lord Byron in his dying moments; but, allowing him the full benefit of that possibility, how shall we explain his introduction of this feebly rabid doggerel as "an infidel's brightest thoughts"?

In marshallling the evidences of Christianity, Dr. Cumming directs most of his arguments against opinions that are either totally imaginary, or that belong to the past rather than to the present; while he entirely fails to meet the difficulties actually felt and urged by those who are unable to accept Revelation. There can hardly be a stronger proof of misconception as to the character of free-thinking in the present day than the recommendation of Leland's "Short and Easy Method with the Deists," — a method which is unquestionably short and easy for preachers disinclined to consider their stereotyped modes of thinking and arguing, but which has quite ceased to realize those epithets in the conversion of Deists. Yet Dr. Cumming not only recommends this book, but takes the trouble himself to write a feebler version of its arguments. For example, on the question of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament writings, he says:—

"If therefore, at a period long subsequent to the death of Christ, a number of men had appeared in the world, drawn up a book which they christened by the name of Holy Scripture, and recorded these things which appear in it as facts when they were only the fancies of their own imagination, surely the *Jews* would have instantly reclaimed that no such events transpired, that no such person as Jesus Christ appeared in their capital, and that *their* crucifixion of Hlm, and their alleged evil treatment of His apostles, were mere fictions."<sup>1</sup>

It is scarcely necessary to say that, in such argument as this, Dr. Cumming is beating the air. He is meeting a hypothesis which no one holds, and totally missing the real

<sup>1</sup> Man. of Ev., p. 81.

question. The only type of "infidel" whose existence Dr. Cumming recognizes is that fossil personage who "calls the Bible a lie and a forgery." He seems to be ignorant—or he chooses to ignore the fact—that there is a large body of eminently instructed and earnest men who regard the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures as a series of historical documents, to be dealt with according to the rules of historical criticism; and that an equally large number of men, who are not historical critics, find the dogmatic scheme built on the letter of the Scriptures opposed to their profoundest moral convictions. Dr. Cumming's infidel is a man who, because his life is vicious, tries to convince himself that there is no God, and that Christianity is an imposture, but who is all the while secretly conscious that he is opposing the truth, and cannot help "letting out" admissions "that the Bible is the Book of God." We are favored with the following "Creed of the Infidel:"—

"I believe that there is no God, but that matter is God, and God is matter; and that it is no matter whether there is any God or not. I believe also that the world was not made, but that the world made itself, or that it had no beginning, and that it will last forever. I believe that man is a beast; that the soul is the body, and that the body is the soul; and that after death there is neither body nor soul. I believe that there is no religion, that *natural religion is the only religion, and all religion unnatural*. I believe not in Moses; I believe in the first philosophers. I believe not in the evangelists; I believe in Chubb, Collins, Toland, Tindal, and Hobbes. I believe in Lord Bolingbroke, and I believe not in St. Paul. I believe not in revelation; *I believe in tradition; I believe in the Talmud; I believe in the Koran*; I believe not in the Bible. I believe in Socrates; I believe in Confucius; I believe in Mahomet; I believe not in Christ. And lastly, *I believe in all unbelief.*"

The intellectual and moral monster whose creed is this complex web of contradictions is, moreover, according to Dr. Cumming, a being who unites much simplicity and imbecility with his Satanic hardihood,—much tenderness of conscience with his obdurate vice. Hear the "proof:"—

"I once met with an acute and enlightened infidel, with whom I reasoned day after day, and for hours together; I submitted to him the internal, the external, and the experimental evidences, but made no impression on his scorn and unbelief. At length I entertained a suspicion that there was something morally, rather than intellectually wrong, and that the bias was not in the intellect, but in the heart; one day therefore I said to him—'I must now state my conviction, and you may call me uncharitable, but duty compels me: you are living in some known and gross sin.' *The man's countenance became pale; he bowed and left me.*"—*Man, of Evidences*, p. 254.

Here we have the remarkable psychological phenomenon of an "acute and enlightened" man who, deliberately purposing to indulge in a favorite sin, and regarding the Gospel with scorn and unbelief, is nevertheless so much more scrupulous than the majority of Christians, that he cannot "embrace sin and the Gospel simultaneously;" who is so alarmed at the Gospel in which he does not believe, that he cannot be easy without trying to crush it; whose acuteness and enlightenment suggest to him, as a means of crushing the Gospel, to argue from day to day with Dr. Cumming; and who is withal so naïve that he is taken by surprise when Dr. Cumming, failing in argument, resorts to accusation, and so tender in conscience that, at the mention of his sin, he turns pale and leaves the spot. If there be any human mind in existence capable of holding Dr. Cumming's "Creed of the Infidel," of at the same time believing in tradition and "believing in all unbelief," it must be the mind of the infidel just described, for whose existence we have Dr. Cumming's *ex officio* word as a theologian; and to theologians we may apply what Sancho Panza says of the bachelors of Salamanca, that they never tell lies — except when it suits their purpose.

The total absence from Dr. Cumming's theological mind of any demarcation between fact and rhetoric is exhibited in another passage, where he adopts the dramatic form:—

"Ask the peasant on the hills — and I have asked amid the mountains of Braemar and Deeside — 'How do you know that this book is divine, and that the religion you profess is true? You never read Paley?' 'No, I never heard of him.' 'You have never read Butler?' 'No, I have never heard of him.' 'Nor Chalmers?' 'No, I do not know him.' 'You have never read any books on evidence?' 'No, I have read no such books.' 'Then, how do you know this book is true?' 'Know it! Tell me that the Dee, the Clunie, and the Garrawall, the streams at my feet, do not run; that the winds do not sigh amid the gorges of these blue hills; that the sun does not kindle the peaks of Loch-na-Gar, — tell me my heart does not beat, and I will believe you; but do not tell me the Bible is not divine. I have found its truth illuminating my footsteps; its consolations sustaining my heart. May my tongue cleave to my mouth's roof, and my right hand forget its cunning, if I ever deny what is my deepest inner experience, that this blessed book is the Book of God.'"  
— Church before the Flood, p. 35.

His own faith, apparently, has not been altogether intuitive, like that of his rhetorical peasant, for he tells us (Apoc. Sketches, p. 405) that he has himself experienced what it is to have religious doubts. "I was tainted while at the University by this spirit of scepticism. I thought Christianity might not be true. The very possibility of its being true was the thought I felt I must meet and settle. Conscience could give me no peace till I had settled it. I read, and I have read from that day, for fourteen or fifteen years, till this, and now I am as convinced, upon the clearest evidence, that this book is the Book of God, as that I now address you." This experience, however, instead of impressing on him the fact that doubt may be the stamp of a truth-loving mind — that *sunt quibus non credidisse honor est, et fidei futuræ pignus* — seems to have produced precisely the contrary effect. It has not enabled him even to conceive the condition of a mind "perplexed in faith but pure in deed," craving light, yearning for a faith that will harmonize and cherish its highest powers and aspirations, but unable to find that faith in dogmatic Christianity. His own doubts apparently were of a different kind. Nowhere in his pages have we found a humble, candid, sympathetic attempt to meet the difficulties that may be felt by an ingenuous mind. Everywhere he supposes that the doubter is hardened, conceited, consciously shutting his eyes to the light — a fool who is to be answered according to his folly — that is, with ready replies made up of reckless assertions, of apocryphal anecdotes, and, where other resources fail, of vituperative imputations. As to the reading which he has prosecuted for fifteen years — *either* it has left him totally ignorant of the relation which his own religious creed bears to the criticism and philosophy of the nineteenth century, *or* he systematically blinks that criticism and that philosophy; and instead of honestly and seriously endeavoring to meet and solve what he knows to be the real difficulties, contents himself with setting up popinjays to shoot at, for the sake of confirming the ignorance and winning the cheap admiration of his evangelical hearers and readers. Like the Catholic preacher who, after throwing down his cap and apostrophizing it as Luther, turned to his audience and said, "You see this heretical fellow has not a word to say for himself," Dr. Cumming, having drawn his ugly portrait of the infidel, and put arguments of a convenient quality into his mouth, finds a "short and easy method" of confounding this "croaking frog."



In his treatment of infidels, we imagine he is guided by a mental process which may be expressed in the following syllogism: Whatever tends to the glory of God is true; it is for the glory of God that infidels should be as bad as possible; therefore, whatever tends to show that infidels are as bad as possible is true. All infidels, he tells us, have been men of "gross and licentious lives." Is there not some well-known unbeliever—David Hume, for example—of whom even Dr. Cumming's readers may have heard as an exception? No matter. Some one suspected that he was *not* an exception; and as that suspicion tends to the glory of God, it is one for a Christian to entertain.—(See *Man. of Ev.*, p. 73.) If we were unable to imagine this kind of self-sophistication, we should be obliged to suppose that, relying on the ignorance of his evangelical disciples, he fed them with direct and conscious falsehoods. "Voltaire," he informs them, "declares there is no God;" he was "an antitheist—that is, one who deliberately and avowedly opposed and hated God; who swore in his blasphemy that he would dethrone Him;" and "advocated the very depths of the lowest sensuality." With regard to many statements of a similar kind, equally at variance with truth, in Dr. Cumming's volumes, we presume that he has been misled by hearsay or by the second-hand character of his acquaintance with free-thinking literature. An evangelical preacher is not obliged to be well read. Here, however, is a case which the extremest supposition of educated ignorance will not reach. Even books of "evidences" quote from Voltaire the line—

"Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer;"

even persons fed on the mere whey and butter-milk of literature must know that in philosophy Voltaire was nothing if not a theist—must know that he wrote not against God, but against Jehovah, the God of the Jews, whom he believed to be a false God—must know that to say Voltaire was an atheist on this ground is as absurd as to say that a Jacobite opposed hereditary monarchy because he declared the Brunswick family had no title to the throne. That Dr. Cumming should repeat the vulgar fables about Voltaire's death is merely what we might expect from the specimens we have seen of his illustrative stories. A man whose accounts of his own experience are apocryphal is not likely to put borrowed narratives to any severe test.

The alliance between intellectual and moral perversion is

strikingly typified by the way in which he alternates from the unveracious to the absurd, from misrepresentation to contradiction. Side by side with the addition of "facts" such as those we have quoted, we find him arguing on one page that the doctrine of the Trinity was too grand to have been conceived by man, and was *therefore* Divine; and on another page, that the Incarnation *had* been pre-conceived by man, and is *therefore* to be accepted as Divine. But we are less concerned with the fallacy of his "ready replies" than with their falsity; and even of this we can only afford space for a very few specimens. Here is one: "There is a *thousand times* more proof that the Gospel of John was written by him than there is that the *Ἀνάβας* was written by Xenophon, or the "Ars Poetica" by Horace. If Dr. Cumming had chosen Plato's Epistles or Anacreon's Poems, instead of the "Anabasis" or the "Ars Poetica," he would have reduced the extent of the falsehood, and would have furnished a ready reply, which would have been equally effective with his Sunday-school teachers and their disputants. Hence we conclude this prodigality of misstatement, this exuberance of mendacity, is an effervescence of zeal in *majorem gloriam Dei*. Elsewhere he tells us that "the idea of the author of the 'Vestiges' is, that man is the development of a monkey, that the monkey is the embryo man; so that *if you keep a baboon long enough, it will develop itself into a man.*" How well Dr. Cumming has qualified himself to judge of the ideas in "that very unphilosophical book," as he pronounces it, may be inferred from the fact that he implies the author of the "Vestiges" to have *originated* the nebular hypothesis.

In the volume from which the last extract is taken, even the hardihood of assertion is surpassed by the suicidal character of the argument. It is called "The Church before the Flood," and is devoted chiefly to the adjustment of the question between the Bible and Geology. Keeping within the limits we have prescribed to ourselves, we do not enter into the matter of this discussion; we merely pause a little over the volume in order to point out Dr. Cumming's mode of treating the question. He first tells us that "the Bible has not a single scientific error in it;" that "*its slightest intimations of scientific principles or natural phenomena have in every instance been demonstrated to be exactly and strictly true;*" and he asks:—

"How is it that Moses, with no greater education than the Hindoo or the ancient philosopher, has written his book, touching science at a

thousand points, so accurately, that scientific research has discovered no flaws in it; and yet in those investigations which have taken place in more recent centuries, it has not been shown that he has committed one single error, or made one solitary assertion which can be proved by the maturest science, or by the most eagle-eyed philosopher, to be incorrect, scientifically or historically?"

According to this, the relation of the Bible to science should be one of the strong points of apologists for revelation: the scientific accuracy of Moses should stand at the head of their evidences; and they might urge with some cogency, that since Aristotle, who devoted himself to science, and lived many ages after Moses, does little else than err ingeniously, this fact, that the Jewish lawgiver, though touching science at a thousand points, has written nothing that has not been "demonstrated to be exactly and strictly true," is an irrefragable proof of his having derived his knowledge from a supernatural source. How does it happen, then, that Dr. Cumming forsakes this strong position? How is it that we find him, some pages further on, engaged in reconciling Genesis with the discoveries of science, by means of imaginative hypotheses and feats of "interpretation"? Surely that which has been demonstrated to be exactly and strictly true does not require hypothesis and critical argument, in order to show that it may *possibly* agree with those very discoveries by means of which its exact and strict truth has been demonstrated. And why should Dr. Cumming suppose, as we shall presently find him supposing, that men of science hesitate to accept the Bible because it appears to contradict their discoveries? By his own statement, that appearance of contradiction does not exist; on the contrary, it has been demonstrated that the Bible precisely agrees with their discoveries. Perhaps, however, in saying of the Bible that its "slightest intimations of scientific principles or natural phenomena have in every instance been demonstrated to be exactly and strictly true," Dr. Cumming merely means to imply that theologians have found out a way of explaining the Biblical text so that it no longer, in their opinion, appears to be in contradiction with the discoveries of science. One of two things, therefore: either, he uses language without the slightest appreciation of its real meaning; or, the assertions he makes on one page are directly contradicted by the arguments he urges on another.

Dr. Cumming's principles—or, we should rather say, confused notions—of Biblical interpretation, as exhibited in this volume, are particularly significant of his mental calibre.

He says ("Church before the Flood," p. 93):—

"Men of science, who are full of scientific investigation, and enamoured of scientific discovery, will hesitate before they accept a book which, they think, contradicts the plainest and the most unequivocal disclosures they have made in the bowels of the earth, or among the stars of the sky. To all these we answer, as we have already indicated, there is not the least dissonance between God's written book and the most mature discoveries of geological science. One thing, however, there may be: *there may be a contradiction between the discoveries of geology and our preconceived interpretations of the Bible.* But this is not because the Bible is wrong, but because our interpretation is wrong." (The italics in all cases are our own.)

Elsewhere he says:—

"It seems to me plainly evident that the record of Genesis, when read fairly, and not in the light of our prejudices, — *and mind you, the essence of Popery is to read the Bible in the light of our opinions, instead of viewing our opinions in the light of the Bible, in its plain and obvious sense,* — falls in perfectly with the assertion of geologists.

On comparing these two passages, we gather that when Dr. Cumming, under stress of geological discovery, assigns to the Biblical text a meaning entirely different from that which, on his own showing, was universally ascribed to it for more than three thousand years, he regards himself as "viewing his opinions in the light of the Bible in its plain and obvious sense!" Now he is reduced to one of two alternatives: either, he must hold that the "plain and obvious meaning" lies in the sum of knowledge possessed by each successive age—the Bible being an elastic garment for the growing thought of mankind; or, he must hold that some portions are amenable to this criterion, and others not so. In the former case, he accepts the principle of interpretation adopted by the early German rationalists; in the latter case, he has to show a further criterion by which we can judge what parts of the Bible are elastic and what rigid. If he says that the interpretation of the text is rigid wherever it treats of doctrines necessary to salvation, we answer, that for doctrines to be necessary to salvation they must first be true; and in order to be true, according to his own principle, they must be founded on a correct interpretation of the Biblical text. Thus he makes the necessity of doctrines to salvation the criterion of infallible interpretation, and infallible interpretation the criterion of doctrines being necessary to salvation. He is whirled round in a circle, having, by admitting the principle

of novelty in interpretation, completely deprived himself of a basis. That he should seize the very moment in which he is most palpably betraying that he has no test of Biblical truth beyond his own opinion, as an appropriate occasion for flinging the rather novel reproach against Popery that its essence is to "read the Bible in the light of our opinions," would be an almost pathetic self-exposure, if it were not disgusting. Imbecility that is not even meek, ceases to be pitiable, and becomes simply odious.

Parenthetic lashes of this kind against Popery are very frequent with Dr. Cumming, and occur even in his more devout passages, where their introduction must surely disturb the spiritual exercises of his hearers. Indeed, Roman Catholics fare worse with him even than infidels. Infidels are the small vermin — the mice to be bagged *en passant*. The main object of his chase — the rats which are to be nailed up as trophies — are the Roman Catholics. Romanism is the master-piece of Satan. But reassure yourselves! Dr. Cumming has been created. Antichrist is enthroned in the Vatican; but he is stoutly withstood by the Boanerges of Crown Court. The personality of Satan, as might be expected, is a very prominent tenet in Dr. Cumming's discourses; those who doubt it are, he thinks, "generally specimens of the victims of Satan as a triumphant seducer;" and it is through the medium of this doctrine that he habitually contemplates Roman Catholics. They are the puppets of which the devil holds the strings. It is only exceptionally that he speaks of them as fellow-men, acted on by the same desires, fears, and hopes as himself; his *rule* is to hold them up to his hearers as foredoomed instruments of Satan, and vessels of wrath. If he is obliged to admit that they are "no shams," that they are "thoroughly in earnest" — that is because they are inspired by hell, because they are under an "infra-natural" influence. If their missionaries are found wherever Protestant missionaries go, this zeal in propagating their faith is not in them a consistent virtue, as it is in Protestants, but a "melancholy fact," affording additional evidence that they are instigated and assisted by the devil. And Dr. Cumming is inclined to think that they work miracles, because that is no more than might be expected from the known ability of Satan who inspires them.<sup>1</sup> He admits, indeed, that "there is a fragment of the Church of Christ in the very bosom of that awful apostasy,"<sup>2</sup> and that there are members of the

<sup>1</sup> *Signs of the Times*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Apoc. Sketches*, p. 243.

Church of Rome in glory; but this admission is rare and episodical—is a declaration, *pro formâ*, about as influential on the general disposition and habits as an aristocrat's profession of democracy.

This leads us to mention another conspicuous characteristic of Dr. Cumming's teaching—the *absence of genuine charity*. It is true that he makes large profession of tolerance and liberality within a certain circle; he exhorts Christians to unity; he would have Churchmen fraternize with Dissenters, and exhorts these two branches of God's family to defer the settlement of their differences till the millennium. But the love thus taught is the love of the *clan*, which is the correlative of antagonism to the rest of mankind. It is not sympathy and helpfulness towards men as men, but towards men as Christians, and as Christians in the sense of a small minority. Dr. Cumming's religion may demand a tribute of love, but it gives a charter to hatred; it may enjoin charity, but it fosters all uncharitableness. If I believe that God tells me to love my enemies, but at the same time hates His own enemies and requires me to have one will with Him, which has the larger scope, love or hatred? And we refer to those pages of Dr. Cumming's in which he opposes Roman Catholics, Puseyites, and infidels—pages which form the larger proportion of what he has published—for proof that the idea of God which both the logic and spirit of his discourses keep present to his hearers is that of a God who hates His enemies, a God who teaches love by fierce denunciations of wrath—a God who encourages obedience to His precepts by elaborately revealing to us that His own government is in precise opposition to those precepts. We know the usual evasions on this subject. We know Dr. Cumming would say that even Roman Catholics are to be loved and succored as men; that he would help even that "unclean spirit," Cardinal Wiseman, out of a ditch. But who that is in the slightest degree acquainted with the action of the human mind, will believe that any genuine and large charity can grow out of an exercise of love which is always to have an *arrière-pensée* of hatred? Of what quality would be the conjugal love of a husband who loved his spouse as a wife, but hated her as a woman? It is reserved for the regenerate mind, according to Dr. Cumming's conception of it, to be "wise, amazed, temperate and furious, loyal and neutral, in a moment." Precepts of charity uttered with faint breath at the end of a sermon are perfectly futile, when all the force of the lungs has been spent in keeping the hearer's mind fixed

on the conception of his fellow-men, not as fellow-sinners and fellow-sufferers, but as agents of hell, as automata through whom Satan plays his game upon earth, — not on objects which call forth their reverence, their love, their hope of good even in the most strayed and perverted, but on a minute identification of human things with such symbols as the scarlet whore, the beast out of the abyss, scorpions whose sting is in their tails, men who have the mark of the beast, and unclean spirits like frogs. You might as well attempt to educate a child's sense of beauty by hanging its nursery with the horrible and grotesque pictures in which the early painters represented the Last Judgment, as expect Christian graces to flourish on that prophetic interpretation which Dr. Cumming offers as the principal nutriment of his flock. Quite apart from the critical basis of that interpretation, quite apart from the degree of truth there may be in Dr. Cumming's prognostications — questions into which we do not choose to enter — his use of prophecy must be *à priori* condemned in the judgment of right-minded persons, by its results as testified in the net moral effect of his sermons. The best minds that accept Christianity as a divinely inspired system, believe that the great end of the Gospel is not merely the saving but the educating of men's souls, the creating within them of holy dispositions, the subduing of egoistical pretensions, and the perpetual enhancing of the desire that the will of God — a will synonymous with goodness and truth — may be done on earth. But what relation to all this has a system of interpretation which keeps the mind of the Christian in the position of a spectator at a gladiatorial show, of which Satan is the wild beast in the shape of the great red dragon, and two-thirds of mankind the victims — the whole provided and got up by God for the edification of the saints? The demonstration that the Second Advent is at hand, if true, can have no really holy, spiritual effect; the highest state of mind inculcated by the Gospel is resignation to the disposal of God's providence — "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; whether we die, we die unto the Lord" — not an eagerness to see a temporal manifestation which shall confound the enemies of God and give exaltation to the saints; it is to dwell in Christ by spiritual communion with His nature, not to fix the date when He shall appear in the sky. Dr. Cumming's delight in shadowing forth the downfall of the Man of Sin, in prognosticating the battle of Gog and Magog, and in advertising the premillennial Advent, is simply the transportation of political passions on to a so-called

religious platform; it is the anticipation of the triumph of "our party," accomplished by our principal men being "sent for" into the clouds. Let us be understood to speak in all seriousness. If we were in search of amusement, we should not seek for it by examining Dr. Cumming's works in order to ridicule them. We are simply discharging a disagreeable duty in delivering our opinion that, judged by the highest standard even of orthodox Christianity, they are little calculated to produce

"A closer walk with God,  
A calm and heavenly frame;"

but are more likely to nourish egoistic complacency and pretension, a hard and condemnatory spirit towards one's fellow-men, and a busy occupation with the minutiae of events, instead of a reverent contemplation of great facts and a wise application of great principles. It would be idle to consider Dr. Cumming's theory of prophecy in any other light, — as a philosophy of history or a specimen of Biblical interpretation; it bears about the same relation to the extension of genuine knowledge as the astrological "house" in the heavens bears to the true structure and relations of the universe.

The slight degree in which Dr. Cumming's faith is imbued with truly human sympathies is exhibited in the way he treats the doctrine of Eternal Punishment. *Here* a little of that readiness to strain the letter of the Scriptures which he so often manifests when his object is to prove a point against Romanism, would have been an amiable frailty if it had been applied on the side of mercy. When he is bent on proving that the prophecy concerning the Man of Sin, in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, refers to the Pope, he can extort from the innocent word *καθίσαι* the meaning *cathedrise*; though why we are to translate "He as God cathedrises in the temple of God," any more than we are to translate "cathedrise here, while I go and pray yonder," it is for Dr. Cumming to show more clearly than he has yet done. But when rigorous literality will favor the conclusion that the greater proportion of the human race will be eternally miserable, *then* he is rigorously literal. He says —

"The Greek words, *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*, here translated 'everlasting,' signify literally 'unto the ages of ages;' *αἰὲν δὲ*, 'always being,' that is, everlasting, ceaseless existence. Plato uses the word in this sense when he says, 'The gods that live for ever.' But I must also admit, that this word is used several times in a limited extent, — as for instance,



'The everlasting hills.' Of course, this does not mean that there never will be a time when the hills will cease to stand; the expression here is evidently figurative, but it implies eternity. The hills shall remain as long as the earth lasts, and no hand has power to remove them but that Eternal One which first called them into being; so *the state of the soul* remains the same after death as long as the soul exists, and no one has power to alter it. The same word is often applied to denote the existence of God — 'the Eternal God.' Can we limit the word when applied to Him? Because occasionally used in a limited sense, we must not infer it is always so. 'Everlasting' plainly means in Scripture 'without end;' it is only to be explained figuratively when it is evident it cannot be interpreted in any other way."

We do not discuss whether Dr. Cumming's interpretation accords with the meaning of the New Testament writers: we simply point to the fact that the text becomes elastic for him when he wants freer play for his prejudices; while he makes it an adamant barrier against the admission that mercy will ultimately triumph, that God — *i. e.*, Love — will be all in all. He assures us that he does not "delight to dwell on the misery of the lost;" and we believe him. That misery does not seem to be a question of feeling with him, either one way or the other. He does not merely resign himself to the awful mystery of eternal punishment; he contends for it. Do we object, he asks,<sup>1</sup> to everlasting happiness? then why object to everlasting misery? — reasoning which is perhaps felt to be cogent by theologians who anticipate the everlasting happiness for themselves, and the everlasting misery for their neighbors.

The compassion of some Christians has been glad to take refuge in the opinion, that the Bible allows the supposition of annihilation for the impenitent; but the rigid sequence of Dr. Cumming's reasoning will not admit of this idea. He sees that flax is made into linen, and linen into paper; that paper, when burnt, partly ascends as smoke, and then again descends in rain, or in dust and carbon. "Not one particle of the original flax is lost, although there may be not one particle that has not undergone an entire change: annihilation is not, but change of form is. *It will be thus with our bodies at the resurrection.* The death of the body means not annihilation. *Not one feature of the face* will be annihilated." Having established the perpetuity of the body by this close and clear analogy — namely, that *as* there is a total change in the particles of flax in consequence of which they no longer appear as flax, *so* there will *not* be a total change in the particles of

<sup>1</sup> Man, of Christ. Ev., p. 184.

the human body, but they will reappear as the human body — he does not seem to consider that the perpetuity of the body involves the perpetuity of the soul, but requires separate evidence for this, and finds such evidence by begging the very question at issue — namely, by asserting that the text of the Scriptures implies “the perpetuity of the punishment of the lost, and the consciousness of the punishment which they endure.” Yet it is drivelling like this which is listened to and lauded as eloquence by hundreds, and which a Doctor of Divinity can believe that he has his “reward as a saint” for preaching and publishing!

One more characteristic of Dr. Cumming’s writings, and we have done. This is the *perverted moral judgment* that everywhere reigns in them. Not that this perversion is peculiar to Dr. Cumming; it belongs to the dogmatic system which he shares with all evangelical believers. But the abstract tendencies of systems are represented in very different degrees, according to the different characters of those who embrace them; just as the same food tells differently on different constitutions: and there are certain qualities in Dr. Cumming that cause the perversion of which we speak to exhibit itself with peculiar prominence in his teaching. A single extract will enable us to explain what we mean: —

“The ‘thoughts’ are evil. If it were possible for human eye to discern and to detect the thoughts that flutter round the heart of an unregenerate man — to mark their hue and their multitude — it would be found that they are indeed ‘evil.’ We speak not of the thief, and the murderer, and the adulterer, and suchlike, whose crimes draw down the cognizance of earthly tribunals, and whose unenviable character it is to take the lead in the paths of sin; but we refer to the men who are marked out by their practice of many of the seemliest moralities of life — by the exercise of the kindest affections, and the interchange of the sweetest reciprocities — and of these men, if unrenewed and unchanged, we pronounce that their thoughts are evil. To ascertain this, we must refer to the object around which our thoughts ought continually to circulate. The Scriptures assert that this object is *the glory of God*; that for this we ought to think, to act, and to speak; and that in thus thinking, acting, and speaking, there is involved the purest and most endearing bliss. Now it will be found true of the most amiable men, that with all their good society and kindness of heart, and all their strict and unbending integrity, they never or rarely think of the glory of God. The question never occurs to them — Will this redound to the glory of God? Will this make His name more known, His being more loved, His praise more sung? And just inasmuch as their every thought comes short of this lofty aim, in so much does it come short of good, and entitle itself to the character of evil. If the glory of God is not the absorbing and the influential aim of their thoughts, then they are evil; but God’s glory never enters into their minds. They are amiable, because it chances to be one of

the constitutional tendencies of their individual character, left unaffected by the Fall; and *they are just and upright, because they have perhaps no occasion to be otherwise, or find it subservient to their interests to maintain such a character.*" — Occ. Disc., vol. 1. p. 8.

Again we read (Ibid., p. 236): —

"There are traits in the Christian character which the mere worldly man cannot understand. He can understand the outward morality, but he cannot understand the inner spring of it; he can understand Dorcas's liberality to the poor, but he cannot penetrate the ground of Dorcas's liberality. *Some men give to the poor because they are ostentatious, or because they think the poor will ultimately avenge their neglect; but the Christian gives to the poor, not only because he has sensibilities like other men, but because inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.*"

Before entering on the more general question involved in these quotations, we must point to the clauses we have marked with italics, where Dr. Cumming appears to express sentiments which, we are happy to think, are not shared by the majority of his brethren in the faith. Dr. Cumming, it seems, is unable to conceive that the natural man can have any other motive for being just and upright than that it is useless to be otherwise, or that a character for honesty is profitable; according to his experience, between the feelings of ostentation and selfish alarm and the feeling of love to Christ, there lie no sensibilities which can lead a man to relieve want. Granting, as we should prefer to think, that it is Dr. Cumming's exposition of his sentiments which is deficient rather than his sentiments themselves, still, the fact that the deficiency lies precisely here, and that he can overlook it not only in the haste of oral delivery but in the examination of proof-sheets, is strongly significant of his mental bias — of the faint degree in which he sympathizes with the disinterested elements of human feeling, and of the fact, which we are about to dwell upon, that those feelings are totally absent from his religious theory. Now, Dr. Cumming invariably assumes that, in fulminating against those who differ from him, he is standing on a moral elevation to which they are compelled reluctantly to look up; that his theory of motives and conduct is in its loftiness and purity a perpetual rebuke to their low and vicious desires and practice. It is time he should be told that the reverse is the fact; that there are men who do not merely cast a superficial glance at his doctrine, and fail to see its beauty or justice, but who, after a close consideration of that

doctrine, pronounce it to be subversive of true moral development, and therefore positively noxious. Dr. Cumming is fond of showing-up the teaching of Romanism, and accusing it of undermining true morality: it is time he should be told that there is a large body, both of thinkers and practical men, who hold precisely the same opinion of his own teaching — with this difference, that they do not regard it as the inspiration of Satan, but as the natural crop of a human mind where the soil is chiefly made up of egoistic passions and dogmatic beliefs.

Dr. Cumming's theory, as we have seen, is that actions are good or evil according as they are prompted or not prompted by an exclusive reference to the "glory of God." God, then, in Dr. Cumming's conception, is a Being who has no pleasure in the exercise of love and truthfulness and justice, considered as affecting the wellbeing of His creatures; He has satisfaction in us only in so far as we exhaust our motives and dispositions of all relation to our fellow-beings, and replace sympathy with men by anxiety for the "glory of God." The deed of Grace Darling, when she took a boat in the storm to rescue drowning men and women, was not good if it was only compassion that nerved her arm and impelled her to brave death for the chance of saving others; it was only good if she asked herself — Will this redound to the glory of God? The man who endures tortures rather than betray a trust, the man who spends years in toil in order to discharge an obligation from which the law declares him free, must be animated not by the spirit of fidelity to his fellow-man, but by a desire to make "the name of God more known." The sweet charities of domestic life — the ready hand and the soothing word in sickness, the forbearance towards frailties, the prompt helpfulness in all efforts and sympathy in all joys — are simply evil if they result from a "constitutional tendency," or from dispositions disciplined by the experience of suffering and the perception of moral loveliness. A wife is not to devote herself to her husband out of love to him and a sense of the duties implied by a close relation — she is to be a faithful wife for the glory of God; if she feels her natural affections welling up too strongly, she is to repress them; it will not do to act from natural affection — she must think of the glory of God. A man is to guide his affairs with energy and discretion, not from an honest desire to fulfil his responsibilities as a member of society and a father, but — that "God's praise may be sung." Dr. Cumming's Christian pays his debts for

the glory of God : were it not for the coercion of that supreme motive, it would be evil to pay them. A man is not to be just from a feeling of justice ; he is not to help his fellow-men out of goodwill to his fellow-men ; he is not to be a tender husband and father out of affection : all these natural muscles and fibres are to be torn away and replaced by a patent steel-spring — anxiety for the “glory of God.”

Happily, the constitution of human nature forbids the complete prevalence of such a theory. Fatally powerful as religious systems have been, human nature is stronger and wider than religious systems, and though dogmas may hamper, they cannot absolutely repress its growth : build walls round the living tree as you will, the bricks and mortar have by and by to give way before the slow and sure operation of the sap. But next to that hatred of the enemies of God which is the principle of persecution, there perhaps has been no perversion more obstructive of true moral development than this substitution of a reference to the glory of God for the direct promptings of the sympathetic feelings. Benevolence and justice are strong only in proportion as they are directly and inevitably called into activity by their proper objects : pity is strong only because we are strongly impressed by suffering ; and only in proportion as it is compassion that speaks through the eyes when we soothe, and moves the arm when we succor, is a deed strictly benevolent. If the soothing or the succor be given because another being wishes or approves it, the deed ceases to be one of benevolence, and becomes one of deference, of obedience, of self-interest, or vanity. Accessory motives may aid in producing an *action*, but they presuppose the weakness of the direct motive ; and conversely, when the direct motive is strong, the action of accessory motives will be excluded. If then, as Dr. Cumming inculcates, the glory of God is to be “the absorbing and the influential aim” in our thoughts and actions, this must tend to neutralize the human sympathies ; the stream of feeling will be diverted from its natural current in order to feed an artificial canal. The idea of God is really moral in its influence — it really cherishes all that is best and loveliest in man — only when God is contemplated as sympathizing with the pure elements of human feeling, as possessing infinitely all those attributes which we recognize to be moral in humanity. In this light, the idea of God and the sense of His presence intensify all noble feeling, and encourage all noble effort, on the same principle that human sympathy is found a source of strength : the brave man

feels braver when he knows that another stout heart is beating time with his; the devoted woman who is wearing out her years in patient effort to alleviate suffering or save vice from the last stages of degradation, finds aid in the pressure of a friendly hand which tells her that there is one who understands her deeds, and in her place would do the like. The idea of a God who not only sympathizes with all we feel and endure for our fellow-men, but who will pour new life into our too languid love, and give firmness to our vacillating purpose, is an extension and multiplication of the effects produced by human sympathy; and it has been intensified for the better spirits who have been under the influence of orthodox Christianity, by the contemplation of Jesus as "God manifest in the flesh." But Dr. Cumming's God is the very opposite of all this: He is a God who, instead of sharing and aiding our human sympathies, is directly in collision with them; who, instead of strengthening the bond between man and man, by encouraging the sense that they are both alike the objects of His love and care, thrusts Himself between them and forbids them to feel for each other except as they have relation to Him. He is a God who, instead of adding His solar force to swell the tide of those impulses that tend to give humanity a common life in which the good of one is the good of all, commands us to check those impulses, lest they should prevent us from thinking of His glory. It is in vain for Dr. Cumming to say that we are to love man for God's sake: with the conception of God which his teaching presents, the love of man for God's sake involves, as his writings abundantly show, a strong principle of hatred. We can only love one being for the sake of another when there is an habitual delight in associating the idea of those two beings — that is, when the object of our indirect love is a source of joy and honor to the object of our direct love. But, according to Dr. Cumming's theory, the majority of mankind — the majority of his neighbors — are in precisely the opposite relation to God. His soul has no pleasure in them: they belong more to Satan than to Him; and if they contribute to His glory, it is against their will. Dr. Cumming, then, can only love *some* men for God's sake; the rest he must in consistency *hate* for God's sake.

There must be many, even in the circle of Dr. Cumming's admirers, who would be revolted by the doctrine we have just exposed, if their natural good sense and healthy feeling were not early stifled by dogmatic beliefs, and their reverence misled by pious phrases. But as it is, many a rational question,

many a generous instinct, is repelled as the suggestion of a supernatural enemy, or as the ebullition of human pride and corruption. This state of inward contradiction can be put an end to only by the conviction that the free and diligent exertion of the intellect, instead of being a sin, is a part of their responsibility—that Right and Reason are synonymous. The fundamental faith for man is faith in the result of a brave, honest, and steady use of all his faculties :—

“ Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before,  
But vaster.”

Before taking leave of Dr. Cumming, let us express a hope that we have in no case exaggerated the unfavorable character of the inferences to be drawn from his pages. His creed often obliges him to hope the worst of men, and to exert himself in proving that the worst is true; but thus far we are happier than he. We have no theory which requires us to attribute unworthy motives to Dr. Cumming, no opinions, religious or irreligious, which can make it a gratification to us to detect him in delinquencies. On the contrary, the better we are able to think of him as a man, while we are obliged to disapprove him as a theologian, the stronger will be the evidence for our conviction, that the tendency towards good in human nature has a force which no creed can utterly counteract, and which insures the ultimate triumph of that tendency over all dogmatic perversions.

## THE INFLUENCE OF RATIONALISM: LECKY'S HISTORY.

THERE is a valuable class of books on great subjects which have something of the character and functions of good popular lecturing. They are not original, not subtle, not of close logical texture, not exquisite either in thought or style; but by virtue of these negatives they are all the more fit to act on the average intelligence. They have enough of organizing purpose in them to make their facts illustrative, and to leave a distinct result in the mind, even when most of the facts are forgotten; and they have enough of vagueness and vacillation in their theory to win them ready acceptance from a mixed audience. The vagueness and vacillation are not devices of timidity; they are the honest result of the writer's own mental character, which adapts him to be the instructor and the favorite of "the general reader." For the most part, the general reader of the present day does not exactly know what distance he goes; he only knows that he does not go "too far." Of any remarkable thinker whose writings have excited controversy, he likes to have it said that "his errors are to be deplored," leaving it not too certain what those errors are: he is fond of what may be called disembodied opinions, that float in vapory phrases above all systems of thought or action; he likes an undefined Christianity which opposes itself to nothing in particular, an undefined education of the people, an undefined amelioration of all things: in fact, he likes sound views, — nothing extreme, but something between the excesses of the past and the excesses of the present. This modern type of the general reader may be known in conversation by the cordiality with which he assents to indistinct, blurred statements: say that black is black, he will shake his head and hardly think it; say that black is not so very black, he will reply, "Exactly." He has no hesitation, if you wish it, even to get up at a public meeting and express his conviction that at times, and within certain limits, the radii of a circle have a tendency to be equal; but, on the other hand, he would urge that the spirit of geometry may be carried a little too



far. His only bigotry is a bigotry against any clearly defined opinion; not in the least based on a scientific scepticism, but belonging to a lack of coherent thought, — a spongy texture of mind, that gravitates strongly to nothing. The one thing he is staunch for is the utmost liberty of private haziness.

But precisely these characteristics of the general reader, rendering him incapable of assimilating ideas unless they are administered in a highly diluted form, make it a matter of rejoicing that there are clever, fair-minded men, who will write books for him, — men very much above him in knowledge and ability, but not too remote from him in their habits of thinking, and who can thus prepare for him infusions of history and science that will leave some solidifying deposit, and save him from a fatal softening of the intellectual skeleton. Among such serviceable writers, Mr. Lecky's "*History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*" entitles him to a high place. He has prepared himself for its production by an unusual amount of well-directed reading; he has chosen his facts and quotations with much judgment; and he gives proof of those important moral qualifications — impartiality, seriousness, and modesty. This praise is chiefly applicable to the long chapter on the history of magic and witchcraft, which opens the work, and to the two chapters on the antecedents and history of persecution, which occur, the one at the end of the first volume, the other at the beginning of the second. In these chapters Mr. Lecky has a narrower and better-traced path before him than in other portions of his work; he is more occupied with presenting a particular class of facts in their historical sequence, and in their relation to certain grand tide-marks of opinion, than with disquisition; and his writing is freer than elsewhere from an apparent confusedness of thought and an exuberance of approximative phrases, which can be serviceable in no other way than as diluents needful for the sort of reader we have just described.

The history of magic and witchcraft has been judiciously chosen by Mr. Lecky as the subject of his first section on the Declining Sense of the Miraculous, because it is strikingly illustrative of a position with the truth of which he is strongly impressed, though he may not always treat of it with desirable clearness and precision — namely, that certain beliefs become obsolete, not in consequence of direct arguments against them, but because of their incongruity with prevalent habits of thought. Here is his statement of the two "classes of in-

fluences," by which the mass of men, in what is called civilized society, get their beliefs gradually modified:—

"If we ask why it is that the world has rejected what was once so universally and so intensely believed, why a narrative of an old woman who had been seen riding on a broomstick, or who was proved to have transformed herself into a wolf, and to have devoured the flocks of her neighbors, is deemed so entirely incredible, most persons would probably be unable to give a very definite answer to the question. It is not because we have examined the evidence and found it insufficient, for the disbelief always precedes, when it does not prevent, examination. It is rather because the idea of absurdity is so strongly attached to such narratives, that it is difficult even to consider them with gravity. Yet at one time no such improbability was felt, and hundreds of persons have been burnt simply on the two grounds I have mentioned.

"When so complete a change takes place in public opinion, it may be ascribed to one or other of two causes. It may be the result of a controversy which has conclusively settled the question, establishing to the satisfaction of all parties a clear preponderance of argument or fact in favor of one opinion, and making that opinion a truism which is accepted by all enlightened men, even though they have not themselves examined the evidence on which it rests. Thus, if any one in a company of ordinarily educated persons were to deny the motion of the earth, or the circulation of the blood, his statement would be received with derision, though it is probable that some of his audience would be unable to demonstrate the first truth, and that very few of them could give sufficient reasons for the second. They may not themselves be able to defend their position; but they are aware that, at certain known periods of history, controversies on those subjects took place, and that known writers then brought forward some definite arguments or experiments, which were ultimately accepted by the whole learned world as rigid and conclusive demonstrations. It is possible, also, for as complete a change to be effected by what is called the spirit of the age. The general intellectual tendencies pervading the literature of a century profoundly modify the character of the public mind. They form a new tone and habit of thought. They alter the measure of probability. They create new attractions and new antipathies, and they eventually cause as absolute a rejection of certain old opinions as could be produced by the most cogent and definite arguments."

Mr. Lecky proceeds to some questionable views concerning the evidences of witchcraft, which seem to be irreconcilable even with his own remarks later on; but they lead him to the statement, thoroughly made out by his historical survey, that "the movement was mainly silent, unargumentative, and insensible; that men came gradually to disbelieve in witchcraft, because they came gradually to look upon it as absurd; and that this new tone of thought appeared, first of all, in those who were least subject to theological influences, and soon spread through the educated laity, and, last of all, took possession of the clergy."

We have rather painful proof that this "second class of influences" with a vast number go hardly deeper than fashion, and that witchcraft to many of us is absurd only on the same ground that our grandfathers' gigs are absurd. It is felt preposterous to think of spiritual agencies in connection with ragged beldames soaring on broomsticks, in an age when it is known that mediums of communication with the invisible world are usually unctuous personages dressed in excellent broadcloth, who soar above the curtain-poles without any broomstick, and who are not given to unprofitable intrigues. The enlightened imagination rejects the figure of a witch with her profile in dark relief against the moon and her broomstick cutting a constellation. No undiscovered natural laws, no names of "respectable" witnesses, are invoked to make us feel our presumption in questioning the diabolic intimacies of that obsolete old woman, for it is known now that the undiscovered laws, and the witnesses qualified by the payment of income-tax, are all in favor of a different conception—the image of a heavy gentleman in boots and black coat-tails foreshortened against the cornice. Yet no less a person than Sir Thomas Browne once wrote that those who denied there were witches, inasmuch as they thereby denied spirits also, were "obliquely and upon consequence a sort, not of infidels, but of atheists." At present, doubtless, in certain circles, unbelievers in heavy gentlemen who float in the air by means of undiscovered laws are also taxed with atheism; illiberal as it is not to admit that mere weakness of understanding may prevent one from seeing how that phenomenon is necessarily involved in the Divine origin of things. With still more remarkable parallelism, Sir Thomas Browne goes on: "Those that, to refute their incredulity, desire to see apparitions, shall questionless never behold any, nor have the power to be so much as witches. The devil hath made them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft, *and to appear to them were but to convert them.*" It would be difficult to see what has been changed here but the mere drapery of circumstance, if it were not for this prominent difference between our own days and the days of witchcraft, that instead of torturing, drowning, or burning the innocent, we give hospitality and large pay to—the highly distinguished medium. At least we are safely rid of certain horrors; but if the multitude—that "farraginous concurrence of all conditions, tempers, sexes, and ages"—do not roll back even to a superstition that carries cruelty in its train, it is not because they possess a cultivated Reason,

but because they are pressed upon and held up by what we may call an external Reason — the sum of conditions resulting from the laws of material growth, from changes produced by great historical collisions shattering the structures of ages and making new highways for events and ideas, and from the activities of higher minds no longer existing merely as opinions and teaching, but as institutions and organizations with which the interests, the affections, and the habits of the multitude are inextricably interwoven. No undiscovered laws accounting for small phenomena going forward under drawing-room tables are likely to affect the tremendous facts of the increase of population, the rejection of convicts by our colonies, the exhaustion of the soil by cotton plantations, which urge even upon the foolish certain questions, certain claims, certain views concerning the scheme of the world, that can never again be silenced. If right reason is a right representation of the coexistences and sequences of things, here are coexistences and sequences that do not wait to be discovered, but press themselves upon us like bars of iron. No *séances* at a guinea a-head for the sake of being pinched by "Mary Jane" can annihilate railways, steamships, and electric telegraphs, which are demonstrating the independence of all human interests, and making self-interest a dust for sympathy. These things are part of the external Reason to which internal silliness has inevitably to accommodate itself.

Three points in the history of magic and witchcraft are well brought out by Mr. Lecky. First, that the cruelties connected with it did not begin until men's minds had ceased to repose implicitly in a sacramental system which made them feel well armed against evil spirits — that is, until the eleventh century, when there came a sort of morning dream of doubt and heresy, bringing on the one side the terror of timid consciences, and on the other the terrorism of authority or zeal bent on checking the rising struggle. In that time of comparative mental repose, says Mr. Lecky —

"All those conceptions of diabolical presence; all that predisposition towards the miraculous, which acted so fearfully upon the imaginations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, existed; but the implicit faith, the boundless and triumphant credulity with which the virtue of ecclesiastical rites was accepted, rendered them comparatively innocuous. If men had been a little less superstitious, the effects of their superstition would have been much more terrible. It was firmly believed that any one who deviated from the strict line of orthodoxy must soon succumb beneath the power of Satan; but as there was no spirit of rebellion or doubt, this persuasion did not produce any extraordinary terrorism."

The Church was disposed to confound heretical opinion with sorcery; false doctrine was especially the devil's work, and it was a ready conclusion that a denier or innovator had held consultation with the father of lies. It is a saying of a zealous Catholic in the sixteenth century, quoted by Maury in his excellent work, 'De la Magie' — "*Crescit cum magia hæresis, cum hæresi magia.*" Even those who doubted were terrified at their doubts, for trust is more easily undermined than terror. Fear is earlier born than hope, lays a stronger grasp on man's system than any other passion, and remains master of a larger group of involuntary actions. A chief aspect of man's moral development is the slow subduing of fear by the gradual growth of intelligence, and its suppression as a motive by the presence of impulses less animally selfish; so that in relation to invisible Power, fear at last ceases to exist, save in that interfusion with higher faculties which we call awe.

Secondly, Mr. Lecky shows clearly that dogmatic Protestantism, holding the vivid belief in Satanic agency to be an essential of piety, would have felt it shame to be a whit behind Catholicism in severity against the devil's servants. Luther's sentiment was that he would not suffer a witch to live (he was not much more merciful to Jews); and, in spite of his fondness for children, believing a certain child to have been begotten by the devil, he recommended the parents to throw it into the river. The torch must be turned on the worst errors of heroic minds — not in irreverent ingratitude, but for the sake of measuring our vast and various debt to all the influences which have concurred, in the intervening ages, to make us recognize as detestable errors the honest convictions of men who, in mere individual capacity and moral force, were very much above us. Again, the Scotch Puritans, during the comparatively short period of their ascendancy, surpassed all Christians before them in the elaborate ingenuity of the tortures they applied for the discovery of witchcraft and sorcery, and did their utmost to prove that if Scotch Calvinism was the true religion, the chief "note" of the true religion was cruelty. It is hardly an endurable task to read the story of their doings; thoroughly to imagine them as a past reality is already a sort of torture. One detail is enough, and it is a comparatively mild one. It was the regular profession of men called "prickers" to thrust long pins into the body of a suspected witch in order to detect the insensible spot which was the infallible sign of her guilt. On a superficial view one would be in danger of saying that the main difference between

the teachers who sanctioned these things and the much-despised ancestors who offered human victims inside a huge wicker idol, was that they arrived at a more elaborate barbarity by a longer series of dependent propositions. I do not share Mr. Buckle's opinion that a Scotch minister's groans were a part of his deliberate plan for keeping the people in a state of terrified subjection; the ministers themselves held the belief they taught, and might well groan over it. What a blessing has a little false logic been to the world! Seeing that men are so slow to question their premises, they must have made each other much more miserable, if pity had not sometimes drawn tender conclusion not warranted by Major and Minor; if there had not been people with an amiable imbecility of reasoning which enabled them at once to cling to hideous beliefs, and to be conscientiously inconsistent with them in their conduct. There is nothing like acute deductive reasoning for keeping a man in the dark: it might be called the *technique* of the intellect, and the concentration of the mind upon it corresponds to that predominance of technical skill in art which ends in degradation of the artist's function, unless new inspiration and invention come to guide it.

And of this there is some good illustration furnished by that third node in the history of witchcraft, the beginning of its end, which is treated in an interesting manner by Mr. Lecky. It is worth noticing, that the most important defences of the belief in witchcraft, against the growing scepticism in the latter part of the sixteenth century and in the seventeenth, were the productions of men who in some departments were among the foremost thinkers of their time. One of them was Jean Bodin, the famous writer on government and jurisprudence, whose "Republic," Hallam thinks, had an important influence in England, and furnished "a store of arguments and examples that were not lost on the thoughtful minds of our country-men." In some of his views he was original and bold; for example, he anticipated Montesquieu in attempting to appreciate the relations of government and climate. Hallam inclines to the opinion that he was a Jew, and attached Divine authority only to the Old Testament. But this was enough to furnish him with his chief data for the existence of witches and for their capital punishment; and in the account of his "Republic" given by Hallam, there is enough evidence that the sagacity which often enabled him to make fine use of his learning was also often entangled in it, to temper our surprise at finding a writer on political science of whom

it could be said that, along with Montesquieu, he was "the most philosophical of those who had read so deeply, the most learned of those who had thought so much," in the van of the forlorn hope to maintain the reality of witchcraft. It should be said that he was equally confident of the unreality of the Copernican hypothesis, on the ground that it was contrary to the tenets of the theologians and philosophers and to common-sense, and therefore subversive of the foundations of every science. Of his work on witchcraft, Mr. Lecky says:—

"The '*Démonomanie des Sorciers*' is chiefly an appeal to authority, which the author deemed on this subject so unanimous and so conclusive, that it was scarcely possible for any sane man to resist it. He appealed to the popular belief in all countries, in all ages, and in all religions. He cited the opinions of an immense multitude of the greatest writers of pagan antiquity, and of the most illustrious of the Fathers. He showed how the laws of all nations recognized the existence of witchcraft; and he collected hundreds of cases which had been investigated before the tribunals of his own or of other countries. He relates with the most minute and circumstantial detail, and with the most unfaltering confidence, all the proceedings at the witches' Sabbath, the methods which the witches employed in transporting themselves through the air, their transformations, their carnal intercourse with the Devil, their various means of injuring their enemies, the signs that lead to their detection, their confessions when condemned, and their demeanor at the stake."

Something must be allowed for a lawyer's affection towards a belief which had furnished so many "cases." Bodin's work had been immediately prompted by the treatise "*De Prestigiis Dæmonum*," written by John Wier, a German physician—a treatise which is worth notice as an example of a transitional form of opinion for which many analogies may be found in the history both of religion and science. Wier believed in demons, and in possession by demons, but his practice as a physician had convinced him that the so-called witches were patients and victims, that the Devil took advantage of their diseased condition to delude them, and that there was no consent of an evil will on the part of the women. He argued that the word in Leviticus translated "witch" meant "poisoner," and besought the princes of Europe to hinder the further spilling of innocent blood. These heresies of Wier threw Bodin into such a state of amazed indignation, that if he had been an ancient Jew instead of a modern economical one, he would have rent his garment. "No one had ever heard of pardon being accorded to sorcerers;" and probably the reason why Charles IX. died young was because he had

pardoned the sorcerer, *Trois Echelles* ! We must remember that this was in 1581, when the great scientific movement of the Renaissance had hardly begun — when Galileo was a youth of seventeen, and Kepler a boy of ten.

But directly afterwards, on the other side, came Montaigne, whose sceptical acuteness could arrive at negatives without any apparatus of method. A certain keen narrowness of nature will secure a man from many absurd beliefs which the larger soul, vibrating to more manifold influences, would have a long struggle to part with. And so we find the charming, chatty Montaigne — in one of the brightest of his essays, "*Des Boiteux*," where he declares that, from his own observation of witches and sorcerers, he should have recommended them to be treated with curative hellebore — stating in his own way a pregnant doctrine, since taught more gravely. It seems to him much less of a prodigy that men should lie, or that their imaginations should deceive them, than that a human body should be carried through the air on a broomstick, or up a chimney, by some unknown spirit. He thinks it a sad business to persuade one's self that the test of truth lies in the multitude of believers — "*en une presse où les fols surpassent de tant les sages en nombre*." Ordinarily, he has observed, when men have something stated to them as a fact, they are more ready to explain it than to inquire whether it is real: "*Ils passent par-dessus les propositions, mais ils examinent les conséquences ; ils laissent les choses, et courent aux causes*." There is a sort of strong and generous ignorance which is as honorable and courageous as science — "*ignorance pour laquelle concevoir il n'y a pas moins de science qu'à concevoir la science*." And *à propos* of the immense traditional evidence which weighed with such men as Bodin, he says: "As for the proofs and arguments founded on experience and facts, I do not pretend to unravel these. What end of a thread is there to lay hold of? I often cut them as Alexander did his knot. *Après tout, c'est mettre ses conjectures à bien haut prix, que d'en faire cuire un homme tout vif*."

Writing like this, when it finds eager readers, is a sign that the weather is changing; yet much later, namely, after 1665, when the Royal Society had been founded, our own Glanvil, the author of the "*Scepsis Scientifica*," a work that was a remarkable advance towards a true definition of the limits of inquiry, and that won him his election as fellow of the Society, published an energetic vindication of the belief in witchcraft, of which Mr. Lecky gives the following sketch: —



"The 'Sadducismus Triumphatus,' which is probably the ablest book ever published in defence of the superstition, opens with a striking picture of the rapid progress of the scepticism in England. Everywhere, a disbelief in witchcraft was becoming fashionable in the upper classes; but it was a disbelief that arose entirely from a strong sense of its antecedent improbability. All who were opposed to the orthodox faith united in discrediting witchcraft. They laughed at it, as palpably absurd, as involving the most grotesque and ludicrous conceptions, as so essentially incredible that it would be a waste of time to examine it. This spirit had arisen since the Restoration, although the laws were still in force, and although little or no direct reasoning had been brought to bear upon the subject. In order to combat it, Glanvil proceeded to examine the general question of the credibility of the miraculous. He saw that the reason why witchcraft was ridiculed was, because it was a phase of the miraculous and the work of the Devil; that the scepticism was chiefly due to those who disbelieved in miracles and the Devil; and that the instances of witchcraft or possession in the Bible were invariably placed on a level with those that were tried in the law courts of England. That the evidence of the belief was overwhelming, he firmly believed — and this, indeed, was scarcely disputed; but, until the sense of a *à priori* improbability was removed, no possible accumulation of facts would cause men to believe it. To that task he accordingly addressed himself. Anticipating the idea and almost the words of modern controversialists, he urged that there was such a thing as a credulity of unbelief; and that those who believe so strange a concurrence of delusions, as was necessary on the supposition of the unreality of witchcraft, were far more credulous than those who accepted the belief. He made his very scepticism his principal weapon; and, analyzing with much acuteness this *à priori* objection, he showed that they rested upon an unwarrantable confidence in our knowledge of the laws of the spirit world; that they implied the existence of some strict analogy between the faculties of men and of spirits; and that, as such analogy most probably did not exist, no reasoning based on the supposition could dispense men from examining the evidence. He concluded with a large collection of cases, the evidence of which was, as he thought, incontestable."

We have quoted this sketch because Glanvil's argument against the *à priori* objection of absurdity is fatiguingly urged in relation to other alleged marvels which, to busy people seriously occupied with the difficulties of affairs, of science, or of art, seem as little worthy of examination as aeronautic broomsticks. And also because we here see Glanvil, in combating an incredulity that does not happen to be his own, wielding that very argument of traditional evidence which he had made the subject of vigorous attack in his "*Scopsis Scientifica*." But perhaps large minds have been peculiarly liable to this fluctuation concerning the sphere of tradition, because, while they have attacked its misapplications, they have been the more solicited by the vague sense that tradition is really the basis of our best life. Our sentiments may be called organized traditions; and a large part of our actions gather

all their justification, all their attraction and aroma, from the memory of the life lived, of the actions done, before we were born. In the absence of any profound research into psychological functions or into the mysteries of inheritance, in the absence of any comprehensive view of man's historical development and the independence of one age on another, a mind at all rich in sensibilities must always have had an indefinite uneasiness in an undistinguishing attack on the coercive influence of tradition. And this may be the apology for the apparent inconsistency of Glanvil's acute criticism on the one side, and his indignation at the "looser gentry," who laughed at the evidences for witchcraft, on the other. We have already taken up too much space with this subject of witchcraft, else we should be tempted to dwell on Sir Thomas Browne, who far surpassed Glanvil in magnificent incongruity of opinion, and whose works are the most remarkable combination existing, of witty sarcasm against ancient nonsense and modern obsequiousness, with indications of a capacious credulity. After all, we may be sharing what seems to us the hardness of these men, who sat in their studies and argued at their ease about a belief that would be reckoned to have caused more misery and bloodshed than any other superstition, if there had been no such thing as persecution on the ground of religious opinion.

On this subject of persecution, Mr. Lecky writes his best: with clearness of conception, with calm justice, bent on appreciating the necessary tendency of ideas, and with an appropriateness of illustration that could be supplied only by extensive and intelligent reading. Persecution, he shows, is not in any sense peculiar to the Catholic Church; it is a direct sequence of the doctrines that salvation is to be had only within the Church, and that erroneous belief is damnatory — doctrines held as fully by Protestant sects as by the Catholics; and in proportion to its power, Protestantism has been as persecuting as Catholicism. He maintains, in opposition to the favorite modern notion of persecution defeating its own object, that the Church, holding the dogma of exclusive salvation, was perfectly consequent, and really achieved its end of spreading one belief and quenching another by calling in the aid of the civil arm. Who will say that Governments, by their power over institutions and patronage, as well as over punishment, have not power also over the interests and inclinations of men, and over most of those external conditions into which subjects are born, and which make them adopt the

prevalent belief as a second nature? Hence, to a sincere believer in the doctrine of exclusive salvation, Governments had it in their power to save men from perdition; and wherever the clergy were at the elbow of the civil arm, no matter whether they were Catholic or Protestant, persecution was the result. "Compel them to come in" was a rule that seemed sanctioned by mercy, and the horrible sufferings it led men to inflict seemed small to minds accustomed to contemplate, as a perpetual source of motive, the eternal unmitigated miseries of a hell that was the inevitable destination of a majority amongst mankind.

It is a significant fact, noted by Mr. Lecky, that the only two leaders of the Reformation who advocated tolerance were Zuinglius and Socinus, both of them disbelievers in exclusive salvation. And in corroboration of other evidence that the chief triumphs of the Reformation were due to coercion, he commends to the special attention of his readers the following quotation from a work attributed without question to the famous Protestant theologian, Jurieu, who had himself been hindered, as a Protestant, from exercising his professional functions in France, and was settled as pastor at Rotterdam. It should be remembered that Jurieu's labors fell in the latter part of the seventeenth century and in the beginning of the eighteenth, and that he was the contemporary of Bayle, with whom he was in bitter controversial hostility. He wrote, then, at a time when there was warm debate on the question of Toleration; and it was his great object to vindicate himself and his French fellow-Protestants from all laxity on this point:—

*"Peut-on nier que le paganisme est tombé dans le monde par l'autorité des empereurs Romains? On peut assurer sans témérité que le paganisme seroit encore debout, et que les trois quarts de l'Europe seroient encore payens si Constantin et ses successeurs n'avaient employé leur autorité pour l'abolir. Mais, je vous prie, de quelles voles Dieu s'est-il servi dans ces derniers siècles pour rétablir la véritable religion dans l'Occident? Les rois de Suède, ceux de Danemarck, ceux d'Angleterre, les magistrats souverains de Suisse, des Païs Bas, des villes libres d'Allemagne, les princes électeurs, et autres princes souverains de l'empire, n'ont-ils pas employé leur autorité pour abattre le Paptisme?"*

Indeed, wherever the tremendous alternative of everlasting torments is believed in—believed in so that it becomes a motive determining the life—not only persecution, but every other form of severity and gloom, are the legitimate consequences. There is much ready declamation in these days against the spirit of asceticism and against zeal for doctrinal

conversion; but surely the macerated form of a Saint Francis, the fierce denunciations of a Saint Dominic, the groans and prayerful wrestlings of the Puritan who seasoned his bread with tears and made all pleasurable sensation sin, are more in keeping with the contemplation of unending anguish as the destiny of a vast multitude whose nature we share, than the rubicund cheerfulness of some modern divines, who profess to unite a smiling liberalism with a well-bred and tacit but unshaken confidence in the reality of the bottomless pit. But in fact, as Mr Lecky maintains, that awful image, with its group of associated dogmas concerning the inherited curse, and the damnation of unbaptized infants, of heathens, and of heretics, has passed away from what he is fond of calling "the realizations" of Christendom. These things are no longer the objects of practical belief. They may be mourned for in encyclical letters; bishops may regret them; doctors of divinity may sign testimonials to the excellent character of these decayed beliefs; but for the mass of Christians they are no more influential than un repealed but forgotten statutes. And with these dogmas has melted away the strong basis for the defence of persecution. No man now writes eager vindications of himself and his colleagues from the suspicion of adhering to the principle of toleration. And this momentous change, it is Mr. Lecky's object to show, is due to that concurrence of conditions which he has chosen to call "the advance of the Spirit of Rationalism."

In other parts of his work, where he attempts to trace the action of the same conditions on the acceptance of miracles and on other chief phases of our historical development, Mr. Lecky has laid himself open to considerable criticism. The chapters on the Miracles of the Church, the æsthetic, scientific, and moral Development of Rationalism, the Secularization of Politics, and the Industrial history of Rationalism, embrace a wide range of diligently gathered facts; but they are nowhere illuminated by a sufficiently clear conception and statement of the agencies at work, or the mode of their action, in the gradual modification of opinion and of life. The writer frequently impresses us as being in a state of hesitation concerning his own standing-point, which may form a desirable stage in private meditation but not in published exposition. Certain epochs in theoretic conception, certain considerations, which should be fundamental to his survey, are introduced quite incidentally in a sentence or two, or in a note which seems to be an afterthought. Great writers and their ideas are

touched upon too slightly and with too little discrimination, and important theories are sometimes characterized with a rashness which conscientious revision will correct. There is a fatiguing use of vague or shifting phrases, such as "modern civilization," "spirit of the age," "tone of thought," "intellectual type of the age," "bias of the imagination," "habits of religious thought," unbalanced by any precise definition; and the spirit of rationalism is sometimes treated of as if it lay outside the specific mental activities of which it is a generalized expression. Mr. Curdle's famous definition of the dramatic unities as "a sort of a general oneness," is not totally false; but such luminousness as it has could only be perceived by those who already knew what the unities were. Mr. Lecky has the advantage of being strongly impressed with the great part played by the emotions in the formation of opinion, and with the high complexity of the causes at work in social evolution; but he frequently writes as if he had never yet distinguished between the complexity of the conditions that produce prevalent states of mind, and the inability of particular minds to give distinct reasons for the preferences or persuasions produced by those states. In brief, he does not discriminate, or does not help his reader to discriminate, between objective complexity and subjective confusion. But the most muddle-headed gentleman who represents the spirit of the age by observing, as he settles his collar, that the development-theory is quite "the thing," is a result of definite processes, if we could only trace them. "Mental attitudes" and "predispositions," however vague in consciousness, have not vague causes, any more than the "blind motions of the spring" in plants and animals.

The word "Rationalism" has the misfortune, shared by most words in this gray world, of being somewhat equivocal. This evil may be nearly overcome by careful preliminary definition; but Mr. Lecky does not supply this, and the original specific application of the word to a particular phase of Biblical interpretation seems to have clung about his use of it with a misleading effect. Through some parts of his book he appears to regard the grand characteristic of modern thought and civilization, compared with ancient, as a radiation in the first instance from a change in religious conceptions. The supremely important fact, that the gradual reduction of all phenomena within the sphere of established law, which carries as a consequence the rejection of the miraculous, has its determining current in the development of physical science,

seems to have engaged comparatively little of his attention; at least, he gives it no prominence. The great conception of universal regular sequence, without partiality and without caprice—the conception which is the most potent force at work in the modification of our faith, and of the practical form given to our sentiments—could only grow out of that patient watching of external fact, and that silencing of preconceived notions, which are urged upon the mind by the problems of physical science.

## THE NATURAL HISTORY OF GERMAN LIFE: RIEHL.

It is an interesting branch of psychological observation to note the images that are habitually associated with abstract or collective terms — what may be called the picture-writing of the mind, which it carries on concurrently with the more subtle symbolism of language. Perhaps the fixity or variety of these associated images would furnish a tolerably fair test of the amount of concrete knowledge and experience which a given word represents, in the minds of two persons who use it with equal familiarity. The word *railways*, for example, will probably call up, in the mind of a man who is not highly locomotive, the image either of a "Bradshaw," or of the station with which he is most familiar, or of an indefinite length of tram-road; he will alternate between these three images, which represent his stock of concrete acquaintance with railways. But suppose a man to have had successively the experience of a "navvy," an engineer, a traveller, a railway director and shareholder, and a landed proprietor in treaty with a railway company, and it is probable that the range of images which would by turns present themselves to his mind at the mention of the word "railways," would include all the essential facts in the existence and relations of the *thing*. Now it is possible for the first-mentioned personage to entertain very expanded views as to the multiplication of railways in the abstract, and their ultimate function in civilization. He may talk of a vast network of railways stretching over the globe, of future "lines" in Madagascar, and elegant refreshment-rooms in the Sandwich Islands, with none the less glibness because his distinct conceptions on the subject do not extend beyond his one station and his indefinite length of tram-road. But it is evident that if we want a railway to be made, or its affairs to be managed, this man of wide views and narrow observation will not serve our purpose.

Probably, if we could ascertain the images called up by the terms "the people," "the masses," "the proletariat," "the

peasantry," by many who theorize on those bodies with eloquence, or who legislate for them without eloquence, we should find that they indicate almost as small an amount of concrete knowledge — that they are as far from completely representing the complex facts summed up in the collective term, as the railway images of our non-locomotive gentleman. How little the real characteristics of the working classes are known to those who are outside them, how little their natural history has been studied, is sufficiently disclosed by our Art as well as by our political and social theories. Where, in our picture exhibitions, shall we find a group of true peasantry? What English artist even attempts to rival in truthfulness such studies of popular life as the pictures of Teniers or the ragged boys of Murillo? Even one of the greatest painters of the pre-eminently realistic school, while, in his picture of "The Hireling Shepherd," he gave us a landscape of marvellous truthfulness, placed a pair of peasants in the foreground who were not much more real than the idyllic swains and damsels of our chimney ornaments. Only a total absence of acquaintance and sympathy with our peasantry could give a moment's popularity to such a picture as "Cross Purposes," where we have a peasant girl who looks as if she knew L. E. L.'s poems by heart, and English rustics, whose costume seems to indicate that they are meant for ploughmen, with exotic features that remind us of a handsome *primo tenore*. Rather than such Cockney sentimentality as this, as an education for the taste and sympathies, we prefer the most crapulous group of boors that Teniers ever painted. But even those among our painters who aim at giving the rustic type of features, who are far above the effeminate feebleness of the "Keepsake" style, treat their subjects under the influence of traditions and prepossessions rather than of direct observation. The notion that peasants are joyous, that the typical moment to represent a man in a smock-frock is when he is cracking a joke and showing a row of sound teeth, that cottage matrons are usually buxom, and village children necessarily rosy and merry, are prejudices difficult to dislodge from the artistic mind, which looks for its subjects into literature instead of life. The painter is still under the influence of idyllic literature, which has always expressed the imagination of the cultivated and town-bred, rather than the truth of rustic life. Idyllic ploughmen are jocund when they drive their team afield; idyllic shepherds make bashful love under hawthorn-bushes; idyllic villagers dance in the checkered shade



and refresh themselves, not immoderately, with spicy nut-brown ale. But no one who has seen much of actual ploughmen thinks them jocund; no one who is well acquainted with the English peasantry can pronounce them merry. The slow gaze, in which no sense of beauty beams, no humor twinkles, — the slow utterance, and the heavy slouching walk, remind one rather of that melancholy animal the camel, than of the sturdy countryman, with striped stockings, red waistcoat, and hat aside, who represents the traditional English peasant. Observe a company of haymakers. When you see them at a distance, tossing up the forkfuls of hay in the golden light, while the wagon creeps slowly with its increasing burden over the meadow, and the bright green space which tells of work done gets larger and larger, you pronounce the scene "smiling," and you think these companions in labor must be as bright and cheerful as the picture to which they give animation. Approach nearer, and you will certainly find that haymaking-time is a time for joking, especially if there are women among the laborers; but the coarse laugh that bursts out every now and then, and expresses the triumphant taunt, is as far as possible from your conception of idyllic merriment. That delicious effervescence of the mind which we call fun has no equivalent for the northern peasant, except tipsy revelry; the only realm of fancy and imagination for the English clown exists at the bottom of the third quart-pot.

The conventional countryman of the stage, who picks up pocket-books and never looks into them, and who is too simple even to know that honesty has its opposite, represents the still lingering mistake, that an unintelligible dialect is a guaranty for ingenuousness, and that slouching shoulders indicate an upright disposition. It is quite true that a thresher is likely to be innocent of any adroit arithmetical cheating, but he is not the less likely to carry home his master's corn in his shoes and pocket; a reaper is not given to writing begging-letters, but he is quite capable of cajoling the dairymaid into filling his small-beer bottle with ale. The selfish instincts are not subdued by the sight of buttercups, nor is integrity in the least established by that classic rural occupation, sheep-washing. To make men moral, something more is requisite than to turn them out to grass.

Opera peasants, whose unreality excites Mr. Ruskin's indignation, are surely too frank an idealization to be misleading; and since popular chorus is one of the most effective elements of the opera, we can hardly object to lyric rustics in elegant

laced bodices and picturesque motley, unless we are prepared to advocate a chorus of colliers in their pit costume, or a ballet of charwomen and stocking-weavers. But our social novels profess to represent the people as they are, and the unreality of their representations is a grave evil. The greatest benefit we owe to the artist, whether painter, poet, or novelist, is the extension of our sympathies. Appeals founded on generalizations and statistics require a sympathy ready-made, a moral sentiment already in activity; but a picture of human life such as a great artist can give, surprises even the trivial and the selfish into that attention to what is apart from themselves, which may be called the raw material of moral sentiment. When Scott takes us into Luckie Mucklebackit's cottage, or tells the story of "The Two Drovers," — when Wordsworth sings to us the reverie of "Poor Susan," — when Kingsley shows us Alton Locke gazing yearningly over the gate which leads from the highway into the first wood he ever saw, — when Hornung paints a group of chimney-sweepers, — more is done towards linking the higher classes with the lower, towards obliterating the vulgarity of exclusiveness, than by hundreds of sermons and philosophical dissertations. Art is the nearest thing to life; it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our contact with our fellow-men beyond the bounds of our personal lot. All the more sacred is the task of the artist when he undertakes to paint the life of the People. Falsification here is far more pernicious than in the more artificial aspects of life. It is not so very serious that we should have false ideas about evanescent fashions — about the manners and conversation of beaux and duchesses; but it *is* serious that our sympathy with the perennial joys and struggles, the toil, the tragedy, and the humor in the life of our more heavily laden fellow-men, should be perverted, and turned towards a false object instead of the true one.

This perversion is not the less fatal because the misrepresentation which gives rise to it has what the artist considers a moral end. The thing for mankind to know is, not what are the motives and influences which the moralist thinks *ought* to act on the laborer or the artisan, but what are the motives and influences which *do* act on him. We want to be taught to feel, not for the heroic artisan or the sentimental peasant, but for the peasant in all his coarse apathy, and the artisan in all his suspicious selfishness.

We have one great novelist who is gifted with the utmost power of rendering the external traits of our town population;

and if he could give us their psychological character — their conceptions of life, and their emotions — with the same truth as their idiom and manners, his books would be the greatest contribution Art has ever made to the awakening of social sympathies. But while he can copy Mrs. Plornish's colloquial style with the delicate accuracy of a sun-picture, while there is the same startling inspiration in his description of the gestures and phrases of "Boots," as in the speeches of Shakespeare's mobs or numskulls, he scarcely ever passes from the humorous and external to the emotional and tragic, without becoming as transcendent in his unreality as he was a moment before in his artistic truthfulness. But for the precious salt of his humor, which compels him to reproduce external traits that serve, in some degree, as a corrective to his frequently false psychology, his preternaturally virtuous poor children and artisans, his melodramatic boatmen and courtesans, would be as noxious as Eugène Sue's idealized proletaires in encouraging the miserable fallacy that high morality and refined sentiment can grow out of harsh social relations, ignorance, and want; or that the working classes are in a condition to enter at once into a millennial state of *altruism*, wherein every one is caring for every one else, and no one for himself.

If we need a true conception of the popular character to guide our sympathies rightly, we need it equally to check our theories, and direct us in their application. The tendency created by the splendid conquests of modern generalization, to believe that all social questions are merged in economical science, and that the relations of men to their neighbors may be settled by algebraic equations, — the dream that the uncultured classes are prepared for a condition which appeals principally to their moral sensibilities, — the aristocratic dilettanteism which attempts to restore the "good old times," by a sort of idyllic masquerading, and to grow feudal fidelity and veneration as we grow prize turnips, by an artificial system of culture, — none of these diverging mistakes can coexist with a real knowledge of the People, with a thorough study of their habits, their ideas, their motives. The land-holder, the clergyman, the mill-owner, the mining-agent, have each an opportunity for making precious observations on different sections of the working classes; but unfortunately their experience is too often not registered at all, or its results are too scattered to be available as a source of information and stimulus to the public mind generally. If any man of sufficient moral and intellectual breadth, whose observations would not

be vitiated by a foregone conclusion, or by a professional point of view, would devote himself to studying the natural history of our social classes, especially of the small shopkeepers, artisans, and peasantry, — the degree in which they are influenced by local conditions, their maxims and habits, the points of view from which they regard their religious teachers, and the degree in which they are influenced by religious doctrines, the interaction of the various classes on each other, and what are the tendencies in their position towards disintegration or towards development, — and if, after all this study, he would give us the result of his observations in a book well nourished with specific facts, his work would be a valuable aid to the social and political reformer.

What we are desiring for ourselves has been in some degree done for the Germans by Riehl, the author of the very remarkable books the titles of which are placed at the bottom of this page;<sup>1</sup> and we wish to make these books known to our readers, not only for the sake of the interesting matter they contain and the important reflections they suggest, but also as a model for some future or actual student of our own people. By way of introducing Riehl to those who are unacquainted with his writings, we will give a rapid sketch from his picture of the German Peasantry, and perhaps this indication of the mode in which he treats a particular branch of his subject may prepare them to follow us with more interest when we enter on the general purpose and contents of his works.

In England, at present, when we speak of the peasantry, we mean scarcely more than the class of farm-servants and farm-laborers; and it is only in the most primitive districts — as in Wales, for example — that farmers are included under the term. In order to appreciate what Riehl says of the German peasantry, we must remember what the tenant-farmers and small proprietors were in England half a century ago, when the master helped to milk his own cows, and the daughters got up at one o'clock in the morning to brew, — when the family dined in the kitchen with the servants, and sat with them round the kitchen fire in the evening. In those days the quarried parlor was innocent of a carpet, and its only specimens of art were a framed sampler and the best tea-board; the daughters even of substantial farmers had often no greater accomplishment in writing and spelling than they could procure at a dame-school; and, instead of carrying on sentiments;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Die Bürgerliche Gesellschaft.* Von W. H. Riehl. Dritte Auflage, 1855  
*Land und Leute.* Von W. H. Riehl. Dritte Auflage, 1856.

correspondence, they were spinning their future table-linen, and looking after every saving in butter and eggs that might enable them to add to the little stock of plate and china which they were laying in against their marriage. In our own day, setting aside the superior order of farmers, whose style of living and mental culture are often equal to that of the professional class in provincial towns, we can hardly enter the least imposing farmhouse without finding a bad piano in the "drawing-room," and some old annuals, disposed with a symmetrical imitation of negligence, on the table; though the daughters may still drop their *h*'s, their vowels are studiously narrow; and it is only in very primitive regions that they will consent to sit in a covered vehicle without springs, which was once thought an advance in luxury on the pillion.

The condition of the tenant-farmers and small proprietors in Germany is, we imagine, about on a par, not, certainly, in material prosperity, but in mental culture and habits, with that of the English farmers who were beginning to be thought old-fashioned nearly fifty years ago; and if we add to these the farm-servants and laborers, we shall have a class approximating in its characteristics to the *Bauernthum*, or peasantry, described by Riehl.

In Germany, perhaps more than in any other country, it is among the peasantry that we must look for the historical type of the national *physique*. In the towns this type has become so modified to express the personality of the individual, that even "family likeness" is often but faintly marked. But the peasants may still be distinguished into groups by their physical peculiarities. In one part of the country we find a longer-legged, in another a broader-shouldered race, which has inherited these peculiarities for centuries. For example, in certain districts of Hesse are seen long faces, with high foreheads, long straight noses, and small eyes with arched eyebrows and large eyelids. On comparing these physiognomies with the sculptures in the church of St. Elizabeth, at Marburg, executed in the thirteenth century, it will be found that the same old Hessian type of face has subsisted unchanged, with this distinction only, that the sculptures represent princes and nobles, whose features then bore the stamp of their race, while that stamp is now to be found only among the peasants. A painter who wants to draw mediæval characters with historic truth, must seek his models among the peasantry. This explains why the old German painters gave the heads of their subjects a greater uniformity

of type than the painters of our day; the race had not attained to a high degree of individualization in features and expression. It indicates, too, that the cultured man acts more as an individual; the peasant, more as one of a group. Hans drives the plough, lives, and thinks just as Knuz does; and it is this fact, that many thousands of men are as like each other in thoughts and habits as so many sheep or oysters, which constitutes the weight of the peasantry in the social and political scale.

In the cultivated world each individual has his style of speaking and writing. But among the peasantry it is the race, the district, the province, that has its style — namely, its dialect, its phraseology, its proverbs, and its songs, which belong alike to the entire body of the people. This provincial style of the peasant is again, like his *physique*, a remnant of history to which he clings with the utmost tenacity. In certain parts of Hungary, there are still descendants of German colonists of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who go about the country as reapers, retaining their old Saxon songs and manners, while the more cultivated German emigrants in a very short time forget their own language, and speak Hungarian. Another remarkable case of the same kind is that of the Wends, a Slavonic race settled in Lusatia, whose numbers amount to 200,000, living either scattered among the German population or in separate parishes. They have their own schools and churches, and are taught in the Slavonic tongue. The Catholics among them are rigid adherents of the Pope; the Protestants not less rigid adherents of Luther, or *Doctor Luther*, as they are particular in calling him — a custom which, a hundred years ago, was universal in Protestant Germany. The Wend clings tenaciously to the usages of his Church, and perhaps this may contribute not a little to the purity in which he maintains the specific characteristics of his race. German education, German law and government, service in the standing army, and many other agencies, are in antagonism to his national exclusiveness; but the *wives* and *mothers* here, as elsewhere, are a conservative influence, and the habits temporarily laid aside in the outer world are recovered by the fireside. The Wends form several stout regiments in the Saxon army; they are sought far and wide, as diligent and honest servants; and many a weakly Dresden or Leipzig child becomes thriving under the care of a Wendish nurse. In their villages they have the air and habits of genuine, sturdy peasants, and all their customs

indicate that they have been, from the first, an agricultural people. For example, they have traditional modes of treating their domestic animals. Each cow has its own name, generally chosen carefully, so as to express the special qualities of the animal; and all important family events are narrated to the *bees* — a custom which is found also in Westphalia. Whether by the help of the bees or not, the Wend farming is especially prosperous; and when a poor Bohemian peasant has a son born to him, he binds him to the end of a long pole and turns his face towards Lusatia, that he may be as lucky as the Wends who live there.

The peculiarity of the peasant's language consists chiefly in his retention of historical peculiarities, which gradually disappear under the friction of cultivated circles. He prefers any proper name that may be given to a day in the calendar, rather than the abstract date, by which he very rarely reckons. In the baptismal names of his children he is guided by the old custom of the country, not at all by whim and fancy. Many old baptismal names, formerly common in Germany, would have become extinct but for their preservation among the peasantry, especially in North Germany; and so firmly have they adhered to local tradition in this matter, that it would be possible to give a sort of typographical statistics of proper names, and distinguish a district by its rustic names as we do by its Flora and Fauna. The continuous inheritance of certain favorite proper names in a family, in some districts, forces the peasant to adopt the princely custom of attaching a numeral to the name, and saying, when three generations are living at once, Hans I., II., and III.; or, in the more antique fashion, Hans the elder, the middle, and the younger. In some of our English counties there is a similar adherence to a narrow range of proper names; and as a mode of distinguishing collateral branches in the same family, you will hear of Jonathan's Bess, Thomas's Bess, and Samuel's Bess — the three Bessies being cousins.

The peasant's adherence to the traditional has much greater inconvenience than that entailed by a paucity of proper names. In the Black Forest and in Hüttenberg you will see him in the dog-days wearing a thick fur cap, because it is a historical fur cap — a cap worn by his grandfather. In the Wetterau, that peasant girl is considered the handsomest who wears the most petticoats. To go to field-labor in seven petticoats can be anything but convenient or agreeable, but it is the traditionally correct thing; and a German peasant girl would think

herself as unfavorably conspicuous in an untraditional costume as an English servant-girl would now think herself in a "linsey-woolsey" apron or a thick muslin cap. In many districts no medical advice would induce the rustic to renounce the tight leather belt with which he injures his digestive functions; you could more easily persuade him to smile on a new communal system than on the unhistorical invention of braces. In the eighteenth century, in spite of the philanthropic preachers of potatoes, the peasant for years threw his potatoes to the pigs and the dogs, before he could be persuaded to put them on his own table. However, the unwillingness of the peasant to adopt innovations has a not unreasonable foundation in the fact, that for him experiments are practical, not theoretical, and must be made with expense of money instead of brains — a fact that is not, perhaps, sufficiently taken into account by agricultural theorists, who complain of the farmer's obstinacy. The peasant has the smallest possible faith in theoretic knowledge; he thinks it rather dangerous than otherwise, as is well indicated by a Lower Rhenish proverb: "One is never too old to learn, said an old woman; so she learned to be a witch."

Between many villages an historical feud — once perhaps the occasion of much bloodshed — is still kept up under the milder form of an occasional round of cudgelling, and the launching of traditional nicknames. An historical feud of this kind still exists, for example, among many villages on the Rhine and more inland places in the neighborhood. *Rheinschnacke* (of which the equivalent is perhaps "water-snake") is the standing term of ignominy for the inhabitant of the Rhine village, who repays it in kind by the epithet "karst" (mattock) or "kukuk" (cuckoo), according as the object of his hereditary hatred belongs to the field or the forest. If any Romeo among the "mattocks" were to marry a Juliet among the "water-snakes," there would be no lack of Tybalts and Mercutios to carry the conflict from words to blows, though neither side knows a reason for the enmity.

A droll instance of peasant conservatism is told of a village on the Taunus, whose inhabitants from time immemorial had been famous for impromptu cudgelling. For this historical offence the magistrates of the district had always inflicted the equally historical punishment of shutting up the most incorrigible offenders, not in prison, but in their own pig-sty. In recent times, however, the Government, wishing to correct the rudeness of these peasants, appointed an "enlightened" man



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as a magistrate, who at once abolished the original penalty above-mentioned. But this relaxation of punishment was so far from being welcome to the villagers, that they presented a petition praying that a more energetic man might be given them as a magistrate, who would have the courage to punish according to law and justice, "as had been beforetime." And the magistrate who abolished incarceration in the pig-sty could never obtain the respect of the neighborhood. This happened no longer ago than the beginning of the present century.

But it must not be supposed that the historical piety of the German peasant extends to anything not immediately connected with himself. He has the warmest piety towards the old tumble-down house which his grandfather built, and which nothing will induce him to improve; but towards the venerable ruins of the old castle that overlooks his village he has no piety at all, and carries off its stones to make a fence for his garden, or tears down the Gothic carving of the old monastic church, which is "nothing to him," to mark off a footpath through his field. It is the same with historical traditions. The peasant has them fresh in his memory, so far as they relate to himself. In districts where the peasantry are unaltered, you discern the remnants of the feudal relations in innumerable customs and phrases, but you will ask in vain for historical traditions concerning the empire, or even concerning the particular princely house to which the peasant is subject. He can tell you what "half people and whole people" mean; in Hesse you will still hear of "four horses making a whole peasant," or of "four-day and three-day peasants": but you will ask in vain about Charlemagne and Frederic Barbarossa.

Riehl well observes that the feudal system, which made the peasant the bondman of his lord, was an immense benefit in a country the greater part of which had still to be colonized, — rescued the peasant from vagabondage, and laid the foundation of persistency and endurance in future generations. If a free German peasantry belongs only to modern times, it is to his ancestor who was a serf, and even, in the earliest times, a slave, that the peasant owes the foundation of his independence — namely, his capability of a settled existence, — nay, his unreasoning persistency, which has its important function in the development of the race.

Perhaps the very worst result of that unreasoning persistency is the peasant's inveterate habit of litigation. Every one

remembers the immortal description of Dandie Dinmont's importunate application to Lawyer Pleydell to manage his "bit lawsuit," till at length Pleydell consents to help him ruin himself, on the ground that Dandie may fall into worse hands. It seems, this is a scene which has many parallels in Germany. The farmer's lawsuit is his point of honor; and he will carry it through, though he knows from the very first day that he shall get nothing by it. The litigious peasant piques himself, like Mr. Saddle-tree, on his knowledge of the law, and this vanity is the chief impulse to many a lawsuit. To the mind of the peasant, law presents itself as the "custom of the country," and it is his pride to be versed in all customs. *Custom with him holds the place of sentiment, of theory, and in many cases of affection.* Riehl justly urges the importance of simplifying law proceedings, so as to cut off this vanity at its source, and also of encouraging, by every possible means, the practice of arbitration.

The peasant never begins his lawsuit in summer, for the same reason that he does not make love and marry in summer,—because he has no time for that sort of thing. Anything is easier to him than to move out of his habitual course, and he is attached even to his privations. Some years ago, a peasant youth, out of the poorest and remotest region of the Westerwald, was enlisted as a recruit, at Weilburg in Nassau. The lad having never in his life slept in a bed, when he had to get into one for the first time began to cry like a child; and he deserted twice because he could not reconcile himself to sleeping in a bed, and to the "fine" life of the barracks: he was homesick at the thought of his accustomed poverty and his thatched hut. A strong contrast this with the feeling of the poor in towns, who would be far enough from deserting because their condition was too much improved! The genuine peasant is never ashamed of his rank and calling; he is rather inclined to look down on every one who does not wear a smock-frock, and thinks a man who has the manners of the gentry is likely to be rather windy and unsubstantial. In some places, even in French districts, this feeling is strongly symbolized by the practice of the peasantry, on certain festival days, to dress the images of the saints in peasant's clothing. History tells us of all kinds of peasant insurrections, the object of which was to obtain relief for the peasants from some of their many oppressions; but of an effort on their part to step out of their hereditary rank and calling, to become gentry, to leave the plough and carry

on the easier business of capitalists or Government functionaries, there is no example.

The German novelists who undertake to give pictures of peasant life, fall into the same mistake as our English novelists; they transfer their own feelings to ploughmen and woodcutters, and give them both joys and sorrows of which they know nothing. The peasant never questions the obligation of family ties — he questions *no custom*, — but tender affection, as it exists amongst the refined part of mankind, is almost as foreign to him as white hands and filbert-shaped nails. That the aged father who has given up his property to his children on condition of their maintaining him for the remainder of his life, is very far from meeting with delicate attentions, is indicated by the proverb current among the peasantry — “Don’t take your clothes off before you go to bed.”<sup>1</sup> Among rustic moral tales and parables, not one is more universal than the story of the ungrateful children, who made their gray-headed father, dependent on them for a maintenance, eat at a wooden trough because he shook the food out of his trembling hands. Then these same ungrateful children observed one day that their own little boy was making a tiny wooden trough; and when they asked him what it was for, he answered — that his father and mother might eat out of it, when he was a man and had to keep them.

Marriage is a very prudential affair, especially among the peasants who have the largest share of property. Politic marriages are as common among them as among princes; and when a peasant-heiress in Westphalia marries, her husband adopts her name, and places his own after it with the prefix *gebörner* (*né*). The girls marry young, and the rapidity with which they get old and ugly is one among the many proofs that the early years of marriage are fuller of hardships than of conjugal tenderness. “When our writers of village stories,” says Riehl, “transferred their own emotional life to the peasant, they obliterated what is precisely his most predominant characteristic — namely, that with him general custom holds the place of individual feeling.”

We pay for greater emotional susceptibility too often by nervous diseases of which the peasant knows nothing. To him headache is the least of physical evils, because he thinks head-work the easiest and least indispensable of all labor. Happily, many of the younger sons in peasant families, by

<sup>1</sup> This proverb is common among the English farmers also.

going to seek their living in the towns, carry their hardy nervous system to amalgamate with the over-wrought nerves of our town population, and refresh them with a little rude vigor. And a return to the habits of peasant life is the best remedy for many moral as well as physical diseases induced by perverted civilization. Riehl points to colonization as presenting the true field for this regenerative process. On the other side of the ocean a man will have the courage to begin life again as a peasant, while at home, perhaps, opportunity as well as courage will fail him. *Appropos* of this subject of emigration, he remarks the striking fact that the native shrewdness and mother-wit of the German peasant seem to forsake him entirely when he has to apply them under new circumstances, and on relations foreign to his experience. Hence it is that the German peasant who emigrates, so constantly falls a victim to unprincipled adventurers in the preliminaries to emigration; but if once he gets his foot on the American soil, he exhibits all the first-rate qualities of an agricultural colonist; and among all German emigrants, the peasant class are the most successful.

But many disintegrating forces have been at work on the peasant character, and degeneration is unhappily going on at a greater pace than development. In the wine districts especially, the inability of the small proprietors to bear up under the vicissitudes of the market, or to ensure a high quality of wine by running the risks of a late vintage, and the competition of beer and cider with the inferior wines, have tended to produce that uncertainty of gain which, with the peasant, is the inevitable cause of demoralization. The small peasant proprietors are not a new class in Germany, but many of the evils of their position are new. They are more dependent on ready money than formerly: thus, where a peasant used to get his wood for building and firing from the common forest, he has now to pay for it with hard cash; he used to thatch his own house, with the help perhaps of a neighbor, but now he pays a man to do it for him; he used to pay taxes in kind, he now pays them in money. The chances of the market have to be discounted, and the peasant falls into the hands of money-lenders. Here is one of the cases in which social policy clashes with a purely economical policy.

Political vicissitudes have added their influence to that of economical changes in disturbing that dim instinct, that reverence for traditional custom, which is the peasant's principle of action. He is in the midst of novelties for which he knows

no reason — changes in political geography, changes of the Government to which he owes fealty, changes in bureaucratic management and police regulations. He finds himself in a new element before an apparatus for breathing in it is developed in him. His only knowledge of modern history is in some of its results — for instance, that he has to pay heavier taxes from year to year. His chief idea of a Government is of a power that raises his taxes, opposes his harmless customs, and torments him with new formalities. The source of all this is the false system of “enlightening” the peasant which has been adopted by the bureaucratic Governments. A system which disregards the traditions and hereditary attachments of the peasant, and appeals only to a logical understanding which is not yet developed in him, is simply disintegrating and ruinous to the peasant character. The interference with the communal regulations has been of this fatal character. Instead of endeavoring to promote to the utmost the healthy life of the Commune, as an organism the conditions of which are bound up with the historical characteristics of the peasant, the bureaucratic plan of government is bent on improvement by its patent machinery of State-appointed functionaries, and off-hand regulations in accordance with modern enlightenment. The spirit of communal exclusiveness — the resistance to the indiscriminate establishment of strangers — is an intense traditional feeling in the peasant. “This gallows is for us and our children,” is the typical motto of this spirit. But such exclusiveness is highly irrational and repugnant to modern liberalism; therefore a bureaucratic Government at once opposes it, and encourages to the utmost the introduction of new inhabitants in the provincial communes. Instead of allowing the peasants to manage their own affairs, and, if they happen to believe that five and four make eleven, to unlearn the prejudice by their own experience in calculation, so that they may gradually understand processes, and not merely see results, bureaucracy comes with its “Ready Reckoner” and works all the peasant’s sums for him — the surest way of maintaining him in his stupidity, however it may shake his prejudice.

Another questionable plan for elevating the peasant is the supposed elevation of the clerical character, by preventing the clergyman from cultivating more than a trifling part of the land attached to his benefice, — that he may be as much as possible of a scientific theologian, and as little as possible of a peasant. In this, Riehl observes, lies one great source

of weakness to the Protestant Church as compared with the Catholic, which finds the great majority of its priests among the owner orders; and we have had the opportunity of making an analogous comparison in England, where many of us can remember country districts in which the great mass of the people were christianized by illiterate Methodist and Independent ministers; while the influence of the parish clergyman among the poor did not extend much beyond a few old women in scarlet cloaks, and a few exceptional church-going laborers.

Bearing in mind the general characteristics of the German peasant, it is easy to understand his relation to the revolutionary ideas and revolutionary movements of modern times. The peasant in Germany, as elsewhere, is a born grumbler. He has always plenty of grievances in his pocket, but he does not generalize those grievances; he does not complain of "government" or "society," probably because he has good reason to complain of the burgomaster. When a few sparks from the first French Revolution fell among the German peasantry, and in certain villages of Saxony the country people assembled together to write down their demands, there was no glimpse in their petition of the "universal rights of man," but simply of their own particular affairs as Saxon peasants. Again, after the July revolution of 1830, there were many insignificant peasant insurrections; but the object of almost all was the removal of local grievances. Toll-houses were pulled down; stamped paper was destroyed; in some places there was a persecution of wild boars, in others of that plentiful tame animal, the German *Rath*, or councillor who is never called into council. But in 1848 it seemed as if the movements of the peasants had taken a new character; in the small western states of Germany it seemed as if the whole class of peasantry was in insurrection. But, in fact, the peasant did not know the meaning of the part he was playing. He had heard that everything was being set right in the towns, and that wonderful things were happening there, so he tied up his bundle and set off. Without any distinct object or resolution, the country people presented themselves on the scene of commotion, and were warmly received by the party leaders. But, seen from the windows of ducal palaces and ministerial hotels, these swarms of peasants had quite another aspect, and it was imagined that they had a common plan of co-operation. This, however, the peasants have never had. Systematic co-operation implies general conceptions, and a provisional subordination of egoism, to which even the arti-



sans of towns have rarely shown themselves equal, and which are as foreign to the mind of the peasant as logarithms or the doctrine of chemical proportions. And the revolutionary fervor of the peasant was soon cooled. The old mistrust of the towns was reawakened on the spot. The Tyrolese peasants saw no great good in the freedom of the press and the constitution, because these changes "seemed to please the gentry so much." Peasants who had given their voices stormily for a German parliament asked afterwards, with a doubtful look, whether it were to consist of infantry or cavalry. When royal domains were declared the property of the State, the peasants in some small principalities rejoiced over this, because they interpreted it to mean that every one would have his share in them, after the manner of the old common and forest rights.

The very practical views of the peasants, with regard to the demands of the people, were in amusing contrast with the abstract theorizing of the educated townsmen. The peasant continually withheld all State payments until he saw how matters would turn out, and was disposed to reckon up the solid benefit, in the form of land or money, that might come to him from the changes obtained. While the townsman was heating his brains about representation on the broadest basis, the peasant asked if the relation between tenant and landlord would continue as before, and whether the removal of the "feudal obligations" meant that the farmer should become owner of the land?

It is in the same naïve way that Communism is interpreted by the German peasantry. The wide spread among them of communistic doctrines, the eagerness with which they listened to a plan for the partition of property, seemed to countenance the notion that it was a delusion to suppose the peasant would be secured from this intoxication by his love of secure possession and peaceful earnings. But, in fact, the peasant contemplated "partition" by the light of a historical reminiscence rather than of novel theory. The golden age, in the imagination of the peasant, was the time when every member of the commune had a right to as much wood from the forest as would enable him to sell some, after using what he wanted in firing, — in which the communal possessions were so profitable that, instead of his having to pay rates at the end of the year, each member of the commune was something in pocket. Hence the peasants in general understood by "partition" that the State lands, especially the forests, would be

divided among the communes, and that, by some political legerdemain or other, everybody would have free firewood, free grazing for his cattle, and, over and above that, a piece of gold without working for it. That he should give up a single clod of his own to further the general "partition" had never entered the mind of the peasant communist; and the perception that this was an essential preliminary to "partition" was often a sufficient cure for his Communism.

In villages lying in the neighborhood of large towns, however, where the circumstances of the peasantry are very different, quite another interpretation of Communism is prevalent. Here the peasant is generally sunk to the position of the proletaire, living from hand to mouth; he has nothing to lose, but everything to gain by "partition." The coarse nature of the peasant has here been corrupted into bestiality by the disturbance of his instincts, while he is as yet incapable of principles; and in this type of the degenerate peasant is seen the worst example of ignorance intoxicated by theory.

A significant hint as to the interpretation the peasants put on revolutionary theories, may be drawn from the way they employed the few weeks in which their movements were unchecked. They felled the forest trees and shot the game; they withheld taxes; they shook off the imaginary or real burdens imposed on them by their mediatized princes, by presenting their "demands" in a very rough way before the ducal or princely "Schloss;" they set their faces against the bureaucratic management of the communes, deposed the Government functionaries who had been placed over them as burgomasters and magistrates, and abolished the whole bureaucratic system of procedure, simply by taking no notice of its regulations, and recurring to some tradition—some old order or disorder of things. In all this it is clear that they were animated not in the least by the spirit of modern revolution, but by a purely narrow and personal impulse towards reaction.

The idea of constitutional government lies quite beyond the range of the German peasant's conceptions. His only notion of representation is that of a representation of ranks—of classes; his only notion of a deputy is of one who takes care, not of the national welfare, but of the interests of his own order. Herein lay the great mistake of the democratic party, in common with the bureaucratic Governments, that they entirely omitted the peculiar character of the peasant from their political calculations. They talked of the "people,"

and forgot that the peasants were included in the term. Only a baseless misconception of the peasant's character could induce the supposition that he would feel the slightest enthusiasm about the principles involved in the reconstitution of the Empire, or even about that reconstitution itself. He has no zeal for a written law, as such, but only so far as it takes the form of a living law — a tradition. It was the external authority which the revolutionary party had won in Baden that attracted the peasants into a participation in the struggle.

Such, Riehl tells us, are the general characteristics of the German peasantry — characteristics which subsist amidst a wide variety of circumstances. In Mecklenburg, Pomerania, and Brandenburg, the peasant lives on extensive estates; in Westphalia he lives in large isolated homesteads; in the Westerwald and in Sauerland, in little groups of villages and hamlets; on the Rhine, land is for the most part parcelled out among small proprietors, who live together in large villages. Then, of course, the diversified physical geography of Germany gives rise to equally diversified methods of land-culture; and out of these various circumstances grow numerous specific differences in manner and character. But the generic character of the German peasant is everywhere the same: in the clean mountain-hamlet and in the dirty fishing-village on the coast; in the plains of North Germany and in the backwoods of America. "Everywhere he has the same historical character — everywhere custom is his supreme law. Where religion and patriotism are still a naïve instinct — are still a sacred *custom* — there begins the class of the German Peasantry."

Our readers will perhaps already have gathered from the foregoing portrait of the German peasant, that Riehl is not a man who looks at objects through the spectacles either of the doctrinaire or the dreamer; and they will be ready to believe what he tells us in his Preface — namely, that years ago he began his wanderings over the hills and plains of Germany for the sake of obtaining, in immediate intercourse with the people, that completion of his historical, political, and economical studies which he was unable to find in books. He began his investigations with no party prepossessions, and his present views were evolved entirely from his own gradually amassed observations. He was, first of all, a pedestrian, and only in the second place a political author. The views at which he has arrived by this inductive process, he sums up in

the term — *social-political-conservatism* ; but his conservatism is, we conceive, of a thoroughly philosophical kind. He sees in European society *incarnate history*, and any attempt to disengage it from its historical elements must, he believes, be simply destructive of social vitality.<sup>1</sup> What has grown up historically can only die out historically, by the gradual operation of necessary laws. The external conditions which society has inherited from the past are but the manifestation of inherited internal conditions in the human beings who compose it; the internal conditions and the external are related to each other as the organism and its medium, and development can take place only by the gradual consentaneous development of both. Take the familiar example of attempts to abolish titles, which have been about as effective as the process of cutting off poppy-heads in a corn-field. "*Jedem Menschen*," says Riehl, "*ist sein Zopf angeboren, warum soll denn der sociale Sprachgebrauch nicht auch seinen Zopf haben?*" — which we may render — "As long as snobism runs in the blood, why should it not run in our speech?" As a necessary preliminary to a purely rational society, you must obtain purely rational men, free from the sweet and bitter prejudices of hereditary affection and antipathy; which is as easy as to get running streams without springs, or the leafy shade of the forest without the secular growth of trunk and branch.

The historical conditions of society may be compared with those of language. It must be admitted that the language of cultivated nations is in anything but a rational state; the great sections of the civilized world are only approximatively intelligible to each other, and even that, only at the cost of long study; one word stands for many things, and many words for one thing; the subtle shades of meaning, and still subtler echoes of association, make language an instrument which scarcely anything short of genius can wield with definiteness and certainty. Suppose, then, that the effort which has been again and again made to construct a universal language on a rational basis has at length succeeded, and that you have a language which has no uncertainty, no whims of idiom, no cumbrous forms, no fitful shimmer of many-hued significance, no hoary archaisms "familiar with forgotten years" — a patent decolorized and non-resonant language, which effects the purpose of communication as perfectly and rapidly as algebraic signs. Your language may be

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this article, in our statement of Riehl's opinions, we must be understood not as quoting Riehl, but as interpreting and illustrating him.

a perfect medium of expression to science, but will never express *life*, which is a great deal more than science. With the anomalies and inconveniences of historical language, you will have parted with its music and its passion, with its vital qualities as an expression of individual character, with its subtle capabilities of wit, with everything that gives it power over the imagination; and the next step in simplification will be the invention of a talking watch, which will achieve the utmost facility and despatch in the communication of ideas by a graduated adjustment of ticks, to be represented in writing by a corresponding arrangement of dots. A melancholy "language of the future"! The sensory and motor nerves that run in the same sheath, are scarcely bound together by a more necessary and delicate union than that which binds men's affections, imagination, wit, and humor, with the subtle ramifications of historical language. Language must be left to grow in precision, completeness, and unity, as minds grow in clearness, comprehensiveness, and sympathy. And there is an analogous relation between the moral tendencies of men and the social conditions they have inherited. The nature of European men has its roots intertwined with the past, and can only be developed by allowing those roots to remain undisturbed while the process of development is going on, until that perfect ripeness of the seed which carries with it a life independent of the root. This vital connection with the past is much more vividly felt on the Continent than in England, where we have to recall it by an effort of memory and reflection; for though our English life is in its core intensely traditional, Protestantism and commerce have modernized the face of the land and the aspects of society in a far greater degree than in any Continental country:—

"Abroad," says Ruskin, "a building of the eighth or tenth century stands ruinous in the open street; the children play around it, the peasants heap their corn in it, the buildings of yesterday nestle about it, and fit their new stones in its rents, and tremble in sympathy as it trembles. No one wonders at it, or thinks of it as separate, and of another time; we feel the ancient world to be a real thing, and one with the new; antiquity is no dream; it is rather the children playing about the old stones that are the dream. But all is continuous, and the words, 'from generation to generation,' understandable here."

This conception of European society as incarnate history, is the fundamental idea of Riehl's books.

After the notable failure of revolutionary attempts conducted from the point of view of abstract democratic and

socialistic theories, after the practical demonstration of the evils resulting from a bureaucratic system which governs by an indiscriminating, dead mechanism, Riehl wishes to urge on the consideration of his countrymen a social policy founded on the special study of the people as they are — on the natural history of the various social ranks. He thinks it wise to pause a little from theorizing, and see what is the material actually present for theory to work upon. It is the glory of the Socialists — in contrast with the democratic doctrinaires, who have been too much occupied with the general idea of “the people” to inquire particularly into the actual life of the people — that they have thrown themselves with enthusiastic zeal into the study at least of one social group — namely, the factory operatives; and here lies the secret of their partial success. But, unfortunately, they have made this special study of a single fragment of society the basis of a theory which quietly substitutes for the small group of Parisian proletaires or English factory-workers, the society of all Europe — nay, of the whole world. And in this way they have lost the best fruit of their investigations. For, says Riehl, the more deeply we penetrate into the knowledge of society in its details, the more thoroughly we shall be convinced that *a universal social policy has no validity except on paper*, and can never be carried into successful practice. The conditions of German society are altogether different from those of French, of English, or of Italian society; and to apply the same social theory to these nations indiscriminately, is about as wise a procedure as Triptolemus Yellowley’s application of the agricultural directions in Virgil’s “Georgics” to his farm in the Shetland Isles.

It is the clear and strong light in which Riehl places this important position, that in our opinion constitutes the suggestive value of his books for foreign as well as German readers. It has not been sufficiently insisted on, that in the various branches of Social Science there is an advance from the general to the special, from the simple to the complex, analogous with that which is found in the series of the sciences, from Mathematics to Biology. To the laws of quantity comprised in Mathematics and Physics are super-added, in Chemistry, laws of quality; to these again are added, in Biology, laws of life; and lastly, the conditions of life in general branch out into its special conditions, or Natural History, on the one hand, and into its abnormal conditions, or Pathology, on the other. And in this series or ramification

of the sciences, the more general science will not suffice to solve the problems of the more special. Chemistry embraces phenomena which are not explicable by Physics; Biology embraces phenomena which are not explicable by Chemistry; and no biological generalization will enable us to predict the infinite specialities produced by the complexity of vital conditions. So Social Science, while it has departments which in their fundamental generality correspond to mathematics and physics — namely, those grand and simple generalizations which trace out the inevitable march of the human race as a whole, and, as a ramification of these, the laws of economical science — has also, in the departments of government and jurisprudence, which embrace the conditions of social life in all their complexity, what may be called its Biology, carrying us on to innumerable special phenomena which outlie the sphere of science, and belong to Natural History. And just as the most thorough acquaintance with physics, or chemistry, or general physiology will not enable you at once to establish the balance of life in your private vivarium, so that your particular society of zoöphytes, molluscs, and echinoderms may feel themselves, as the Germans say, at ease in their skin; so the most complete equipment of theory will not enable a statesman or a political and social reformer to adjust his measures wisely, in the absence of a special acquaintance with the section of society for which he legislates, with the peculiar characteristics of the nation, the province, the class whose well-being he has to consult. In other words, a wise social policy must be based not simply on abstract social science, but on the Natural History of social bodies.

Riehl's books are not dedicated merely to the argumentative maintenance of this or of any other position; they are intended chiefly as a contribution to that knowledge of the German people on the importance of which he insists. He is less occupied with urging his own conclusions than with impressing on his readers the facts which have led him to those conclusions. In the volume entitled "*Land und Leute*," which, though published last, is properly an introduction to the volume entitled "*Die Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*," he considers the German people in their physical-geographical relations; he compares the natural divisions of the race, as determined by land and climate, and social traditions, with the artificial divisions which are based on diplomacy; and he traces the genesis and influences of what we may call the ecclesiastical geography of Germany — its partition between

Catholicism and Protestantism. He shows that the ordinary antithesis of North and South Germany represents no real ethnographical distinction, and that the natural divisions of Germany, founded on its physical geography, are threefold — namely, the low plains, the middle mountain region, and the high mountain region, or Lower, Middle, and Upper Germany; and on this primary natural division all the other broad ethnographical distinctions of Germany will be found to rest. The plains of North or Lower Germany include all the seaboard the nation possesses; and this, together with the fact that they are traversed to the depth of 600 miles by navigable rivers, makes them the natural seat of a trading race. Quite different is the geographical character of Middle Germany. While the northern plains are marked off into great divisions, by such rivers as the Lower Rhine, the Weser, and the Oder, running almost in parallel lines, this central region is cut up like a mosaic by the capricious lines of valleys and rivers. Here is the region in which you find those famous roofs from which the rain-water runs towards two different seas, and the mountain-tops from which you may look into eight or ten German States. The abundance of water-power and the presence of extensive coal-mines allow of a very diversified industrial development in Middle Germany. In Upper Germany, or the high mountain region, we find the same symmetry in the lines of the rivers as in the north; almost all the great Alpine streams flow parallel with the Danube. But the majority of these rivers are neither navigable nor available for industrial objects, and instead of serving for communication, they shut off one great tract from another. The slow development, the simple peasant-life of many districts, is here determined by the mountain and the river. In the south-east, however, industrial activity spreads through Bohemia towards Austria, and forms a sort of balance to the industrial districts of the Lower Rhine. Of course, the boundaries of these three regions cannot be very strictly defined; but an approximation to the limits of Middle Germany may be obtained by regarding it as a triangle, of which one angle lies in Silesia, another in Aix-la-Chapelle, and a third at Lake Constance.

This triple division corresponds with the broad distinctions of climate. In the northern plains the atmosphere is damp and heavy; in the southern mountain region it is dry and rare, and there are abrupt changes of temperature, sharp contrasts between the seasons, and devastating storms; but in both these zones men are hardened by conflict with the rough-



nesses of the climate. In Middle Germany, on the contrary, there is little of this struggle; the seasons are more equable, and the mild, soft air of the valleys tends to make the inhabitants luxurious and sensitive to hardships. It is only in exceptional mountain districts that one is here reminded of the rough, bracing air on the heights of Southern Germany. It is a curious fact that, as the air becomes gradually lighter and rarer from the North German coast towards Upper Germany, the average of suicides regularly decreases. Mecklenburg has the highest number, then Prussia, while the fewest suicides occur in Bavaria and Austria.

Both the northern and southern regions have still a large extent of waste lands, downs, morasses, and heaths; and to these are added, in the south, abundance of snow-fields and naked rock; while in Middle Germany culture has almost overspread the face of the land, and there are no large tracts of waste. There is the same proportion in the distribution of forests. Again, in the north we see a monotonous continuity of wheat-fields, potato-grounds, meadow-lands, and vast heaths; and there is the same uniformity of culture over large surfaces in the southern table-lands and the Alpine pastures. In Middle Germany, on the contrary, there is a perpetual variety of crops within a short space: the diversity of land surface, and the corresponding variety in the species of plants, are an invitation to the splitting up of estates, and this again encourages to the utmost the motley character of the cultivation.

According to this threefold division, it appears that there are certain features common to North and South Germany in which they differ from Central Germany, and the nature of this difference Richl indicates by distinguishing the former as *Centralized Land* and the latter as *Individualized Land*—a distinction which is well symbolized by the fact that North and South Germany possess the great lines of railway which are the medium for the traffic of the world, while Middle Germany is far richer in lines for local communication, and possesses the greatest length of railway within the smallest space. Disregarding superficialities, the East Frieslanders, the Schleswig-Holsteiners, the Mecklenburgers, and the Pomeranians are much more nearly allied to the old Bavarians, the Tyrolese, and the Styrians, than any of these are allied to the Saxons, the Thuringians, or the Rhinelanders. Both in North and South Germany original races are still found in large masses, and popular dialects are spoken; you still find

there thoroughly peasant districts, thorough villages, and also, at great intervals, thorough cities; you still find there a sense of rank. In Middle Germany, on the contrary, the original races are fused together or sprinkled hither and thither; the peculiarities of the popular dialects are worn down or confused; there is no very strict line of demarcation between the country and the town population, hundreds of small towns and large villages being hardly distinguishable in their characteristics; and the sense of rank, as part of the organic structure of society, is almost extinguished. Again, both in the north and south there is still a strong ecclesiastical spirit in the people, and the Pomeranian sees Antichrist in the Pope as clearly as the Tyrolese sees him in Doctor Luther; while in Middle Germany the confessions are mingled—they exist peaceably side by side in very narrow space, and tolerance or indifference has spread itself widely even in the popular mind. And the analogy, or rather the causal relation, between the physical geography of the three regions and the development of the population goes still further:—

“For,” observes Riehl, “the striking connection which has been pointed out between the local geological formations in Germany and the revolutionary disposition of the people, has more than a metaphorical significance. Where the primeval physical revolutions of the globe have been the wildest in their effects, and the most multiform strata have been tossed together or thrown one upon the other, it is a very intelligible consequence that on a land surface thus broken up, the population should sooner develop itself into small communities, and that the more intense life generated in these smaller communities should become the most favorable nidus for the reception of modern culture, and with this a susceptibility for its revolutionary ideas; while a people settled in a region where its groups are spread over a large space will persist much more obstinately in the retention of its original character. The people of Middle Germany have none of that exclusive one-sidedness which determines the peculiar genius of great national groups, just as this one-sidedness or uniformity is wanting to the geological and geographical character of their land.”

This ethnographical outline Riehl fills up with special and typical descriptions, and then makes it the starting-point for a criticism of the actual political condition of Germany. The volume is full of vivid pictures, as well as penetrating glances into the maladies and tendencies of modern society. It would be fascinating as literature, if it were not important for its facts and philosophy. But we can only commend it to our readers, and pass on to the volume entitled “*Die Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*,” from which we have drawn our sketch of the

German peasantry. Here Riehl gives us a series of studies in that natural history of the people, which he regards as the proper basis of social policy. He holds that, in European society, there are *three natural ranks or estates*: the hereditary landed aristocracy, the citizens or commercial class, and the peasantry or agricultural class. By *natural ranks* he means ranks which have their roots deep in the historical structure of society, and are still, in the present, showing vitality above ground; he means those great social groups which are not only distinguished externally by their vocation, but essentially by their mental character, their habits, their mode of life,—by the principle they represent in the historical development of society. In his conception of the "Fourth Estate" he differs from the usual interpretation, according to which it is simply equivalent to the Proletariat, or those who are dependent on daily wages, whose only capital is their skill or bodily strength—factory operatives, artisans, agricultural laborers, to whom might be added, especially in Germany, the day-laborers with the quill, the literary proletariat. This, Riehl observes, is a valid basis of economical classification, but not of social classification. In his view, the Fourth Estate is a stratum produced by the perpetual abrasion of the other great social groups; it is the sign and result of the decomposition which is commencing in the organic constitution of society. Its elements are derived alike from the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, and the peasantry. It assembles under its banner the deserters of historical society, and forms them into a terrible army, which is only just awaking to the consciousness of its corporate power. The tendency of this Fourth Estate, by the very process of its formation, is to do away with the distinctive historical character of the other estates, and to resolve their peculiar rank and vocation into a uniform social relation founded on an abstract conception of society. According to Riehl's classification, the day-laborers, whom the political economist designates as the Fourth Estate, belong partly to the peasantry or agricultural class, and partly to the citizens or commercial class.

Riehl considers, in the first place, the peasantry and aristocracy as the "Forces of social persistence," and, in the second, the bourgeoisie and the "fourth estate" as the "Forces of social movement."

The aristocracy, he observes, is the only one among these four groups which is denied by others besides Socialists to have any natural basis as a separate rank. It is admitted

that there was once an aristocracy which had an intrinsic ground of existence; but now, it is alleged, this is an historical fossil, an antiquarian relic, venerable because gray with age. In what, it is asked, can consist the peculiar vocation of the aristocracy, since it has no longer the monopoly of the land, of the higher military functions, and of Government offices, and since the service of the Court has no longer any political importance? To this Riehl replies that in great revolutionary crises, the "men of progress" have more than once "abolished" the aristocracy. But remarkably enough, the aristocracy has always reappeared. This measure of abolition showed that the nobility were no longer regarded as a real class, for to abolish a real class would be an absurdity. It is quite possible to contemplate a voluntary breaking-up of the peasant or citizen class in the socialistic sense, but no man in his senses would think of straightway "abolishing" citizens and peasants. The aristocracy, then, was regarded as a sort of cancer, or excrescence of society. Nevertheless, not only has it been found impossible to annihilate a hereditary nobility by decree; but also, the aristocracy of the eighteenth century outlived even the self-destructive acts of its own perversity. A life which was entirely without object, entirely destitute of functions, would not, says Riehl, be so persistent. He has an acute criticism of those who conduct a polemic against the idea of a hereditary aristocracy while they are proposing an "aristocracy of talent," which after all is based on the principle of inheritance. The Socialists are, therefore, only consistent in declaring against an aristocracy of talent. "But when they have turned the world into a great Foundling Hospital, they will still be unable to eradicate the 'privileges of birth.'" We must not follow him in his criticism, however; nor can we afford to do more than mention hastily his interesting sketch of the mediæval aristocracy, and his admonition to the German aristocracy of the present day, that the vitality of their class is not to be sustained by romantic attempts to revive mediæval forms and sentiments, but only by the exercise of functions as real and salutary for actual society as those of the mediæval aristocracy were for the feudal age. "In modern society the divisions of rank indicate *division of labor*, according to that distribution of functions in the social organism which the historical constitution of society has determined. In this way the principle of differentiation and the principle of unity are identical."

The elaborate study of the German bourgeoisie which forms

the next division of the volume must be passed over; but we may pause a moment to note Riehl's definition of the social *Philister* (Philistine), an epithet for which we have no equivalent — not at all, however, for want of the object it represents. Most people who read a little German, know that the epithet *Philister* originated in the *Burschen-Leben*, or student-life of Germany, and that the antithesis of *Bursch* and *Philister* was equivalent to the antithesis of "gown" and "town;" but since the word has passed into ordinary language, it has assumed several shades of significance which have not yet been merged in a single absolute meaning; and one of the questions which an English visitor in Germany will probably take an opportunity of asking is, "What is the strict meaning of the word *Philister*?" Riehl's answer is, that the *Philister* is one who is indifferent to all social interests, all public life, as distinguished from selfish and private interests; he has no sympathy with political and social events except as they affect his own comfort and prosperity, as they offer him material for amusement or opportunity for gratifying his vanity. He has no social or political creed, but is always of the opinion which is most convenient for the moment. He is always in the majority, and is the main element of unreason and stupidity in the judgment of a "discerning public." It seems presumptuous in us to dispute Riehl's interpretation of a German word, but we must think that, in literature, the epithet *Philister* has usually a wider meaning than this — includes his definition and something more. We imagine the *Philister* is the personification of the spirit which judges everything from a lower point of view than the subject demands — which judges the affairs of the parish from the egotistic or purely personal point of view — which judges the affairs of the nation from the parochial point of view, and does not hesitate to measure the merits of the universe from the human point of view. At least, this must surely be the spirit to which Goethe alludes in a passage cited by Riehl himself, where he says that the Germans need not be ashamed of erecting a monument to him as well as to Blücher; for if Blücher had freed them from the French, he (Goethe) had freed them from the nets of the *Philister*: —

"Ihr mögt mir immer ungescheut  
Gleich Blüchern Denkmal setzen!  
Von Franzosen hat er euch befreit,  
Ich von Philister-netzen."

Goethe could hardly claim to be the apostle of public spirit; but he is eminently the man who helps us to rise to a lofty point of observation, so that we may see things in their relative proportions.

The most interesting chapters in the description of the "Fourth Estate," which concludes the volume, are those on the "Aristocratic Proletariat" and the "Intellectual Proletariat." The Fourth Estate in Germany, says Riehl, has its centre of gravity not, as in England and France, in the day-laborers and factory operatives, and still less in the degenerate peasantry. In Germany, the *educated* proletariat is the leaven that sets the mass in fermentation; the dangerous classes there go about, not in blouses, but in frock-coats; they begin with the impoverished prince and end in the hungriest *littérateur*. The custom that all the sons of a nobleman shall inherit their father's title, necessarily goes on multiplying that class of aristocrats who are not only without function but without adequate provision, and who shrink from entering the ranks of the citizens by adopting some honest calling. The younger son of a prince, says Riehl, is usually obliged to remain without any vocation; and however zealously he may study music, painting, literature, or science, he can never be a regular musician, painter, or man of science; his pursuit will be called a "passion," not a "calling," and to the end of his days he remains a *dilettante*. "But the ardent pursuit of a fixed practical calling can alone satisfy the active man." Direct legislation cannot remedy this evil. The inheritance of titles by younger sons is the universal custom, and custom is stronger than law. But if all Government preference for the "aristocratic proletariat" were withdrawn, the sensible men among them would prefer emigration, or the pursuit of some profession, to the hungry distinction of a title without rents.

The intellectual proletaires Riehl calls the "church militant" of the Fourth Estate in Germany. In no other country are they so numerous; in no other country is the trade in material and industrial capital so far exceeded by the wholesale and retail trade, the traffic and the usury, in the intellectual capital of the nation. *Germany yields more intellectual produce than it can use and pay for.*

"This over-production, which is not transient but permanent, nay, is constantly on the increase, evidences a diseased state of the national industry, a perverted application of industrial powers, and is a far more pungent satire on the national condition than all the poverty of operatives and peasants. . . . Other nations need not envy us the preponderance of the

intellectual proletariat over the proletaires of manual labor. For man more easily becomes diseased from over-study than from the labor of the hands; and it is precisely in the intellectual proletariat that there are the most dangerous seeds of disease. This is the group in which the opposition between earnings and wants, between the ideal social position and the real, is the most hopelessly irreconcilable."

We must unwillingly leave our readers to make acquaintance for themselves with the graphic details with which Riehl follows up this general statement: but before quitting these admirable volumes, let us say, lest our inevitable omissions should have left room for a different conclusion, that Riehl's conservatism is not in the least tinged with the partisanship of a class, with a poetic fanaticism for the past, or with the prejudice of a mind incapable of discerning the grander evolution of things to which all social forms are but temporarily subservient. It is the conservatism of a clear-eyed, practical, but withal large-minded man — a little caustic, perhaps, now and then in his epigrams on democratic doctrinaires who have their nostrum for all political and social diseases, and on communistic theories which he regards as "the despair of the individual in his own manhood, reduced to a system," but nevertheless able and willing to do justice to the elements of fact and reason in every shade of opinion and every form of effort. He is as far as possible from the folly of supposing that the sun will go backward on the dial, because we put the hands of our clock backward; he only contends against the opposite folly of decreeing that it shall be mid-day, while in fact the sun is only just touching the mountain-tops, and all along the valley men are stumbling in the twilight.

### THREE MONTHS IN WEIMAR.

It was between three and four o'clock, on a fine morning in August, that, after a ten hours' journey from Frankfort, I awoke at the Weimar station. No tipsiness can be more dead to all appeals than that which comes from fitful draughts of sleep on a railway journey by night. To the disgust of your wakeful companions, you are totally insensible to the existence of your umbrella, and to the fact that your carpet-bag is stowed under your seat, or that you have borrowed books and tucked them behind the cushion. "What's the odds, so long as one can sleep?" is your philosophic formula, and it is not until you have begun to shiver on the platform in the early morning air that you become alive to property and its duties — *i.e.*, to the necessity of keeping a fast grip upon it. Such was my condition when I reached the station at Weimar. The ride to the town thoroughly roused me, all the more because the glimpses I caught from the carriage-window were in startling contrast with my preconceptions. The lines of houses looked rough and straggling, and were often interrupted by trees peeping out from the gardens behind. At last we stopped before the Erbprinz, an inn of long standing in the heart of the town, and were ushered along heavy-looking in-and-out corridors, such as are found only in German inns, into rooms which overlooked a garden just like one you may see at the back of a farmhouse in many an English village.

A walk in the morning in search of lodgings confirmed the impression that Weimar was more like a market-town than the precinct of a Court. "And this is the Athens of the North!" we said. Materially speaking, it is more like Sparta. The blending of rustic and civic life, the indications of a central government in the midst of very primitive-looking objects, has some distant analogy with the condition of old Lacedæmon. The shops are most of them such as you would see in the back streets of an English provincial town, and the commodities on sale are often chalked on the doorposts. A loud rumbling of vehicles may indeed be heard now and then; but the rumbling is loud, not because the vehicles are



many, but because the springs are few. The inhabitants seemed to us to have more than the usual heaviness of *Germanity*; even their stare was slow, like that of herbivorous quadrupeds. We set out with the intention of exploring the town, and at every other turn we came into a street which took us *out* of the town, or else into one that led us back to the market from which we set out. One's first feeling was, How could Goethe live here in this dull, lifeless village? The reproaches cast on him for his worldliness and attachment to Court splendor seemed ludicrous enough, and it was inconceivable that the stately Jupiter, in a frock-coat, so familiar to us all through Rauch's statuette, could have habitually walked along these rude streets and among these slonching mortals. Not a picturesque bit of building was to be seen; there was no quaintness, nothing to remind one of historical associations, nothing but the most arid prosaism.

This was the impression produced by a first morning's walk in Weimar—an impression which very imperfectly represents what Weimar is, but which is worth recording, because it is true as a sort of back view. Our ideas were considerably modified when, in the evening, we found our way to the Belvedere *chaussée*, a splendid avenue of chestnut-trees, two miles in length, reaching from the town to the summer residence of Belvedere; when we saw the Schloss, and discovered the labyrinthine beauties of the park; indeed every day opened to us fresh charms in this quiet little valley and its environs. To any one who loves Nature in her gentle aspects, who delights in the checkered shade on a summer morning, and in a walk on the corn-clad upland at sunset, within sight of a little town nestled among the trees below, I say—come to Weimar. And if you are weary of English unrest, of that society of “eels in a jar,” where each is trying to get his head above the other, the somewhat stupid well-being of the Weimarians will not be an unwelcome contrast, for a short time at least. If you care nothing about Goethe and Schiller and Herder and Wieland, why, so much the worse for you—you will miss many interesting thoughts and associations; still, Weimar has a charm independent of these great names.

First among all its attractions is the Park, which would be remarkably beautiful even among English parks, and it has one advantage over all these—namely, that it is without a fence. It runs up to the houses, and far out into the corn-fields and meadows, as if it had a “sweet will” of its own,

like a river or a lake, and had not been planned and planted by human will. Through it flows the Ilm,—not a clear stream, it must be confessed, but, like all water, as Novalis says, “an eye to the landscape.” Before we came to Weimar we had had dreams of boating on the Ilm, and we were not a little amused at the difference between this vision of our own and the reality. A few water-fowl are the only navigators of the river, and even they seem to confine themselves to one spot, as if they were there purely in the interest of the picturesque. The real extent of the park is small, but the walks are so ingeniously arranged, and the trees are so luxuriant and various, that it takes weeks to learn the turnings and windings by heart, so as no longer to have the sense of novelty. In the warm weather our great delight was the walk which follows the course of the Ilm, and is overarched by tall trees with patches of dark moss on their trunks, in rich contrast with the transparent green of the delicate leaves, through which the golden sunlight played, and checkered the walk before us. On one side of this walk the rocky ground rises to the height of twenty feet or more, and is clothed with mosses and rock-plants. On the other side there are, every now and then, openings,—breaks in the continuity of shade, which show you a piece of meadow-land, with fine groups of trees; and at every such opening a seat is placed under the rock, where you may sit and chat away the sunny hours, or listen to those delicate sounds which one might fancy came from tiny bells worn on the garment of Silence to make us aware of her invisible presence. It is along this walk that you come upon a truncated column, with a serpent twined round it, devouring cakes, placed on the column as offerings,—a bit of rude sculpture in stone. The inscription—*Genio loci*—enlightens the learned as to the significance of this symbol, but the people of Weimar, unedified by classical allusions, have explained the sculpture by a story which is an excellent example of a modern myth. Once on a time, say they, a huge serpent infested the park, and evaded all attempts to exterminate him, until at last a cunning baker made some appetizing cakes which contained an effectual poison, and placed them in the serpent’s reach, thus meriting a place with Hercules, Theseus, and other monster-slayers. Weimar, in gratitude, erected this column as a memorial of the baker’s feat and its own deliverance. A little farther on is the Borkenhäus, where Carl August used to play the hermit for days together, and from which he used to telegraph to Goethe in his

Gartenhaus. Sometimes we took our shady walk in the *Stern*, the oldest part of the park plantations, on the opposite side of the river, lingering on our way to watch the crystal brook which hurries on, like a foolish young maiden, to wed itself with the muddy Ilm. The *Stern* (Star), a large circular opening amongst the trees, with walks radiating from it, has been thought of as the place for the projected statues of Goethe and Schiller. In Rauch's model for these statues the poets are draped in togas, Goethe, who was considerably the shorter of the two, resting his hand on Schiller's shoulder; but it has been wisely determined to represent them in their "habit as they lived;" so Rauch's design is rejected. Against classical idealizing in portrait sculpture, Weimar has already a sufficient warning in the colossal statue of Goethe, executed after Bettina's design, which the readers of the "Correspondence with a Child" may see engraved as a frontispiece to the second volume. This statue is locked up in an odd structure, standing in the park, and looking like a compromise between a church and a summer-house (Weimar does *not* shine in its buildings!) How little real knowledge of Goethe must the mind have that could wish to see him represented as a naked Apollo, with a Psyche at his knee! The execution is as feeble as the sentiment is false; the Apollo-Goethe is a caricature, and the Psyche is simply vulgar. The statue was executed under Bettina's encouragement, in the hope that it would be bought by the King of Prussia; but a breach having taken place between her and her Royal friend, a purchaser was sought in the Grand Duke of Weimar, who, after transporting it at enormous expense from Italy, wisely shut it up where it is seen only by the curious.

As autumn advanced and the sunshine became precious, we preferred the broad walk on the higher grounds of the park, where the masses of trees are finely disposed, leaving wide spaces of meadow which extend on one side to the *Belvedere allée* with its avenue of chestnut-trees, and on the other to the little cliffs which I have already described as forming a wall by the walk along the Ilm. Exquisitely beautiful were the graceful forms of the plane-trees, thrown in golden relief on a background of dark pines. Here we used to turn and turn again in the autumn afternoons, — at first bright and warm, then sombre with low-lying purple clouds, and chill with winds that sent the leaves raining from the branches. The eye here welcomes, as a contrast, the white façade of a building looking like a small Greek temple, placed on the edge of the cliff, and

you at once conclude it to be a bit of pure ornament, — a device to set off the landscape ; but you presently see a porter seated near the door of the basement story, beguiling the *ennui* of his sinecure by a book and a pipe, and you learn with surprise that this is another retreat for ducal dignity to unbend and philosophize in. Singularly ill-adapted to such a purpose it seems to beings not ducal. On the other side of the *Ilm* the park is bordered by the road leading to the little village of Ober Weimar, — another sunny walk which has the special attraction of taking one by Goethe's *Gartenhaus*, his first residence at Weimar. Inside, this *Gartenhaus* is a homely sort of cottage, such as many an English nobleman's gardener lives in ; no furniture is left in it, and the family wish to sell it. Outside, its aspect became to us like that of a dear friend, whose irregular features and rusty clothes have a peculiar charm. It stands, with its bit of garden and orchard, on a pleasant slope, fronting the west ; before it the park stretches one of its meadowy openings to the trees which fringe the *Ilm*, and between this meadow and the garden hedge lies the said road to Ober Weimar. A grove of weeping birches sometimes tempted us to turn out of this road up to the fields at the top of the slope, on which not only the *Gartenhaus* but several other modest villas are placed. From this little height one sees to advantage the plantations of the park in their autumnal coloring ; the town with its steep-roofed church, and castle clock-tower, painted a gay green ; the bushy line of the *Belvedere chaussée*, and *Belvedere* itself peeping on an eminence from its nest of trees. Here, too, was the place for seeing a lovely sunset, — such a sunset as September sometimes gives us, — when the western horizon is like a rippled sea of gold, sending over the whole hemisphere golden vapors, which, as they near the east, are subdued to a deep rose-color.

The *Schloss* is rather a stately, ducal-looking building, forming three sides of a quadrangle. Strangers are admitted to see a suit of rooms called the *Dichter-Zimmer* (Poets' Rooms), dedicated to Goethe, Schiller, and Wieland. The idea of these rooms is really a pretty one: in each of them there is a bust of the poet who is its presiding genius, and the walls of the Schiller and Goethe rooms are covered with frescos representing scenes from their works. The Wieland room is much smaller than the other two, and serves as an ante-chamber to them ; it is also decorated more sparingly, but the arabesques on the walls are very tastefully designed, and satisfy one better than the ambitious compositions from Goethe and Schiller.

A more interesting place to visitors is the library, which occupies a large building not far from the Schloss. The principal *Saal*, surrounded by a broad gallery, is ornamented with some very excellent busts and some very bad portraits. Of the busts, the most remarkable is that of Gluck, by Houdon — a striking specimen of the *real* in art. The sculptor has given every scar made by the small-pox; he has left the nose as pug and insignificant, and the mouth as common, as Nature made them; but then he has done what, doubtless, Nature also did — he has spread over those coarsely cut features the irradiation of genius. A specimen of the opposite style in art is Trippel's bust of Goethe as the young Apollo, also fine in its way. It was taken when Goethe was in Italy; and in the "*Italienische Reise*," mentioning the progress of the bust, he says that he sees little likeness to himself, but is not discontented that he should go forth to the world as such a good-looking fellow — *hübscher Bursch*. This bust, however, is a *frank idealization*: when an artist tells us that the ideal of a Greek god divides his attention with his immediate subject, we are warned. But one gets rather irritated with idealization in portrait when as in Dannecker's bust of Schiller, one has been misled into supposing that Schiller's brow was square and massive, while in fact, it was receding. We say this partly on the evidence of his skull, a cast of which is kept in the library, so that we could place it in juxtaposition with the bust. The story of this skull is curious. When it was determined to disinter Schiller's remains, that they might repose in company with those of Carl August and Goethe, the question of identification was found to be a difficult one, for his bones were mingled with those of ten insignificant fellow-mortals. When, however, the eleven skulls were placed in juxtaposition, a large number of persons who had known Schiller, separately and successively fixed upon the same skull as his, and their evidence was clinched by the discovery that the teeth of this skull corresponded to the statement of Schiller's servant, that his master had lost no teeth, except one, which he specified. Accordingly it was decided that this was Schiller's skull, and the comparative anatomist, Loder, was sent for from Jena to select the bones which completed the skeleton.<sup>1</sup> The evidence certainly leaves room for a doubt; but the receding forehead of the skull agrees with the testimony of persons who knew

Schiller, that he had, as Rauch said to us, a "miserable forehead;" it agrees, also, with a beautiful miniature of Schiller, taken when he was about twenty. This miniature is deeply interesting; it shows us a youth whose clearly cut features, with the mingled fire and melancholy of their expression, could hardly have been passed with indifference; it has the *langer Gänsehals* (long goose-neck) which he gives to his Karl Moor; but instead of the black, sparkling eyes, and the gloomy, overhanging, bushy eyebrows he chose for his robber hero, it has the fine wavy, auburn locks, and the light-blue eyes which belong to our idea of pure German race. We may be satisfied that we know at least the *form* of Schiller's features, for in this particular his busts and portraits are in striking accordance; unlike the busts and portraits of Goethe, which are a proof, if any were wanted, how inevitably subjective art is, even when it professes to be purely imitative — how the most active perception gives us rather a reflex of what we think and feel, than the real sum of objects before us. The Goethe of Rauch or of Schwanthaler is widely different in form, as well as expression, from the Goethe of Stieler; and Winterberger, the actor, who knew Goethe intimately, told us that to him not one of all the likenesses, sculptured or painted, seemed to have more than a faint resemblance to their original. There is, indeed, one likeness, taken in his old age, and preserved in the library, which is startling from the conviction it produces of close resemblance, and Winterberger admitted it to be the best he had seen. It is a tiny miniature painted on a small cup, of Dresden china, and is so wonderfully executed, that a magnifying-glass exhibits the perfection of its texture as if it were a flower or a butterfly's wing. It is more like Stieler's portrait than any other; the massive neck, unbent though withered, rises out of his dressing-gown, and supports majestically a head, from which one might imagine (though, alas! it never is so in reality) that the discipline of seventy years had purged away all meaner elements than those of the sage and the poet — a head which might serve as a type of sublime old age. Amongst the collection of toys and trash, melancholy records of the late Grand Duke's eccentricity, which occupy the upper rooms of the library, there are some precious relics hanging together in a glass case, which almost betray one into sympathy with "holy coat" worship. They are — Luther's gown, the coat in which Gustavus Adolphus was shot, and Goethe's Court coat and *Schlafrack*. What a rush of thoughts from the mingled memories of the passionate reformer, the heroic warrior, and the wise singer!

The only one of its great men to whom Weimar has at present erected a statue in the open air is Herder. His statue, erected in 1850, stands in what is called the Herder Platz, with its back to the church in which he preached; in the right hand is a roll bearing his favorite motto — *Licht, Liebe, Leben* (Light, Love, Life), and on the pedestal is the inscription — *Von Deutschen aller Länder* (from Germans of all lands). This statue, which is by Schaller of Munich, is very much admired; but, remembering the immortal description in the "Dichtung und Wahrheit," of Herder's appearance when Goethe saw him for the first time at Strasburg, I was disappointed with the parsonic appearance of the statue, as well as of the bust in the library. The part of the town which imprints itself on the memory, next to the Herder Platz, is the Markt, a cheerful square, made smart by a new Rath-haus. Twice a week it is crowded with stalls and country people; and it is the very pretty custom for the band to play in the balcony of the Rath-haus about twenty minutes every market-day to delight the ears of the peasantry. A head-dress worn by many of the old women, and here and there by a young one, is, I think, peculiar to Thuringia. Let the fair reader imagine half a dozen of her broadest French sashes dyed black, and attached as streamers to the back of a stiff black skull-cap, ornamented in front with a large bow, which stands out like a pair of donkey's ears; let her further imagine, mingled with the streamers of ribbon, equally broad pendants of a thick woollen texture, something like the fringe of an urn-rug, — and she will have an idea of the head-dress in which I have seen a Thuringian damsel figure on a hot summer's day. Two houses in the Markt are pointed out as those from which Tetzels published his indulgences and Luther thundered against them; but it is difficult to one's imagination to conjure up scenes of theological controversy in Weimar, where, from princes down to pastry-cooks, rationalism is taken as a matter of course.

Passing along the Schiller-strasse, a broad pleasant street, one is thrilled by the inscription, *Hier wohnte Schiller*, over the door of a small house with oasts in its bow-window. Mount up to the second story and you will see Schiller's study very nearly as it was when he worked in it. It is a cheerful room with three windows, two towards the street and one looking on a little garden which divides his house from the neighboring one. The writing-table, which he notes as an important purchase in one of his letters to Körner, and in

one of the drawers of which he used to keep rotten apples for the sake of their scent, stands near the last-named window, so that its light would fall on his left hand. On another side of the room is his piano, with his guitar lying upon it; and above these hangs an ugly print of an Italian scene, which has a companion equally ugly on another wall. Strange feelings it awakened in me to run my fingers over the keys of the little piano and call forth its tones, now so queer and feeble, like those of an invalided old woman whose voice could once make a heart beat with fond passion or soothe its angry pulses into calm. The bedstead on which Schiller died has been removed into the study, from the small bedroom behind, which is now empty. A little table is placed close to the head of the bed, with his drinking-glass upon it, and on the wall above the bedstead there is a beautiful sketch of him lying dead. He used to occupy the whole of the second floor. It contains, besides the study and bedroom, an ante-chamber, now furnished with casts and prints on sale, in order to remunerate the custodiers of the house, and a *salon* tricked out, since his death, with a symbolical cornice, statues, and a carpet worked by the ladies of Weimar.

Goethe's house is much more important-looking, but, to English eyes, far from being the palatial residence which might be expected, from the descriptions of German writers. The entrance-hall is indeed rather imposing, with its statues in niches, and its broad staircase, but the rest of the house is not proportionately spacious and elegant. The only part of the house open to the public — and this only on a Friday — is the principal suite of rooms which contain his collection of casts, pictures, cameos, etc. This collection is utterly insignificant, except as having belonged to him; and one turns away from bad pictures and familiar casts, to linger over the manuscript of the wonderful "*Römische Elegien*," written by himself in the Italian character. It is to be regretted that a large sum offered for this house by the German Diet, was refused by the Goethe family, in the hope, it is said, of obtaining a still larger sum from that mythical English Cræsus always ready to turn fabulous sums into dead capital, who haunts the imagination of Continental people. One of the most fitting tributes a nation can pay to its great dead, is to make their habitation, like their works, a public possession, a shrine where affectionate reverence may be more vividly reminded that the being who has bequeathed to us immortal thoughts or immortal deeds, had to endure the daily struggle with the



petty details, perhaps with the sordid cares of this working-day world; and it is a sad pity that Goethe's study, bedroom, and library, so fitted to call up that kind of sympathy, because they are preserved just as he left them, should be shut out from all but the specially privileged. We were happy enough to be amongst these, — to look through the mist of rising tears at the dull study with its two small windows, and without a single object chosen for the sake of luxury or beauty; at the dark little bedroom with the bed on which he died, and the arm-chair where he took his morning coffee as he read; at the library with its common deal shelves, and books containing his own paper marks. In the presence of this hardy simplicity, the contrast suggests itself of the study at Abbotsford with its elegant Gothic fittings, its delicious easy-chair, and its oratory of painted glass.

We were very much amused at the privacy with which people keep their shops at Weimar. Some of them have not so much as their names written up; and there is so much indifference of manner towards customers, that one might suppose every shopkeeper was a salaried functionary employed by Government. The distribution of commodities, too, is carried on according to a peculiar Weimarian logic: we bought our lemons at a ropemaker's, and should not have felt ourselves very unreasonable if we had asked for shoes at a stationer's. As to competition, I should think a clever tradesman or artificer is almost as free from it at Weimar as *Æsculapius* or *Vulcan* in the days of old *Olympus*. Here is an illustration. Our landlady's husband was called the "*süsser* Rabenhorst," by way of distinguishing him from a brother of his who was the reverse of sweet. This Rabenhorst, who was not sweet, but who nevertheless dealt in sweets, for he was a confectioner, was so utter a rogue that any transaction with him was avoided almost as much as if he had been the Evil One himself, yet so clever a rogue that he always managed to keep on the windy side of the law. Nevertheless, he had so many dainties in the confectionery line — *so viel Süßigkeiten und Leckerbissen* — that people bent on giving a fine entertainment were at last constrained to say, "After all, I must go to Rabenhorst;" and so he got abundant custom, in spite of general detestation.

A very fair dinner is to be had at several *tables d'hôte* in Weimar for ten or twelve groschen (a shilling or fifteenpence). The Germans certainly excel us in their *Mehlspeise*, or farinaceous puddings, and in their mode of cooking vegetables;

they are bolder and more imaginative in their combination of sauces, fruits, and vegetables with animal food, and they are faithful to at least one principle of dietetics — variety. The only thing at table we have any pretext for being supercilious about is the quality and dressing of animal food. The meat at a *table d'hôte* in Thuringia, and even Berlin, except in the very first hotels, bears about the same relation to ours as horse-flesh probably bears to German beef and mutton; and an Englishman with a bandage over his eyes would often be sorely puzzled to guess the kind of flesh he was eating. For example, the only flavor we could ever discern in hare, which is a very frequent dish, was that of the more or less disagreeable fat which predominated in the dressing; and roast-meat seems to be considered an extravagance rarely admissible. A melancholy sight is a flock of Weimarian sheep, followed or led by their shepherd. They are as dingy as London sheep, and far more skinny; indeed an Englishman who dined with us said the sight of the sheep had set him against mutton. Still, the variety of dishes you get for ten groschen is something marvellous to those who have been accustomed to English charges, and among the six courses it is not a great evil to find a dish or two the reverse of appetizing. I suppose, however, that the living at *tables d'hôte* gives one no correct idea of the mode in which the people live at home. The basis of the national food seems to be raw ham and sausage, with a copious superstratum of *Blaukraut*, *Snuerkraut*, and black bread. Sausage seems to be to the German what potatoes were to the Irish — the *sine quâ non* of bodily sustenance. Goethe asks the Fran von Stein to send him *so eine Wurst* when he wants to have a make-shift dinner away from home; and in his letters to Kestner he is enthusiastic about the delights of dining on *Blaukraut* and *Leberwurst* (blue cabbage and liver sausage). If *Kraut* and *Wurst* may be called the solid prose of Thuringian diet, fish and *Kuchen* (generally a heavy kind of fruit tart) are the poetry: the German appetite disports itself with these as the English appetite does with ices and whipped creams.

At the beginning of August, when we arrived in Weimar, almost every one was away — “at the Baths,” of course — except the tradespeople. As birds nidify in the spring, so Germans wash themselves in the summer; their *Waschungstrieb* acts strongly only at a particular time of the year; during all the rest, apparently, a decanter and a sugar-basin or pie-dish are an ample toilet-service for them. We were

quite contented, however, that it was not yet the Weimar "season," fashionably speaking, since it was the very best time for enjoying something far better than Weimar gayeties — the lovely park and environs. It was pleasant, too, to see the good bovine citizens enjoying life in their quiet fashion. Unlike our English people, they take pleasure into their calculations, and seem regularly to set aside part of their time for recreation. It is understood that something is to be done in life besides business and housewifery: the women take their children and their knitting to the *Erholung*, or walk with their husbands to Belvedere, or in some other direction where a cup of coffee is to be had. The *Erholung*, by the way, is a pretty garden, with shady walks, abundant seats, an orchestra, a ball-room, and a place for refreshments. The higher classes are subscribers and visitors here as well as the *bourgeoisie*; but there are several resorts of a similar kind frequented by the latter exclusively. The reader of Goethe will remember his little poem, "Die Lustigen von Weimar," which still indicates the round of amusements in this simple capital: the walk to Belvedere or Tiefurt; the excursion to Jena, or some other trip, not made expensive by distance; the round game at cards; the dance; the theatre; and so many other enjoyments to be had by a people not bound to give dinner-parties and "keep up a position."

It is charming to see how real an amusement the theatre is to the Weimar people. The greater number of places are occupied by subscribers, and there is no fuss about toilet or escort. The ladies come alone, and slip quietly into their places without need of "protection" — a proof of civilization perhaps more than equivalent to our pre-eminence in patent locks and carriage springs — and after the performance is over, you may see the same ladies following their servants, with lanterns, through streets innocent of gas, in which an oil-lamp, suspended from a rope slung across from house to house, occasionally reveals to you the shafts of a cart or omnibus, conveniently placed for you to run upon them.

A yearly autumn festival at Weimar is the *Vogelschiessen*, or Bird-shooting; but the reader must not let his imagination wander at this word into fields and brakes. The bird here concerned is of wood, and the shooters, instead of wandering over breezy down and common, are shut up, day after day, in a room clouded with tobacco-smoke, that they may take their turn at shooting with the rifle from the window of a closet about the size of a sentinel's box. However, this is a mighty

enjoyment to the Thuringian yeomanry, and an occasion of profit to our friend Punch, and other itinerant performers ; for while the *Vogelschiessen* lasts, a sort of fair is held in the field where the marksmen assemble.

Among the quieter every-day pleasures of the Weimarians, perhaps the most delightful is the stroll on a bright afternoon or evening to the Duke's summer residence of Belvedere, about two miles from Weimar. As I have said, a glorious avenue of chestnut-trees leads all the way from the town to the entrance of the grounds, which are open to all the world as much as to the Duke himself. Close to the palace and its subsidiary buildings there is an inn, for the accommodation of the good people who come to take dinner or any other meal here, by way of holiday-making. A sort of pavilion stands on a spot commanding a lovely view of Weimar and its valley, and here the Weimarians constantly come on summer and autumn evenings to smoke a cigar, or drink a cup of coffee. In one wing of the little palace, which is made smart by wooden cupolas, with gable pinnacles, there is a saloon, which I recommend to the imitation of tasteful people in their country houses. It has no decoration but that of natural foliage : ivy is trained at regular intervals up the pure white walls, and all round the edge of the ceiling, so as to form pilasters and a cornice ; ivy again, trained on trellis-work, forms a blind to the window, which looks towards the entrance-court ; and beautiful ferns, arranged in tall baskets, are placed here and there against the walls. The furniture is of light cane-work. Another pretty thing here is the Natur-Theater — a theatre constructed with living trees, trimmed into walls and side scenes. We pleased ourselves for a little while with thinking that this was one of the places where Goethe acted in his own dramas, but we afterwards learned that it was not made until his acting days were over. The inexhaustible charm of Belvedere, however, is the grounds, which are laid out with a taste worthy of a first-rate landscape-gardener. The tall and graceful limes, plane-trees, and weeping birches, the little basins of water here and there, with fountains playing in the middle of them, and with a fringe of broad-leaved plants, or other tasteful bordering round them, the gradual descent towards the river, and the hill clothed with firs and pines on the opposite side, forming a fine dark background for the various and light foliage of the trees that ornament the gardens — all this we went again and again to enjoy, from the time when everything was of a vivid green until the Virginian

creepers which festooned the silver stems of the birches were bright scarlet, and the touch of autumn had turned all the green to gold. One of the spots to linger in is at a semicircular seat against an artificial rock, on which are placed large glass globes of different colors. It is wonderful to see with what minute perfection the scenery around is painted in these globes. Each is like a pre-Raphaelite picture, with every little detail of gravelly walk, mossy bank, and delicately leaved, interlacing boughs, presented in accurate miniature.

In the opposite direction to Belvedere lies Tiefurt, with its small park and tiny chateau, formerly the residence of the Duchess Amalia, the mother of Carl August, and the friend and patroness of Wieland, but now apparently serving as little else than a receptacle for the late Duke Carl Friederich's rather childish collections. In the second story there is a suite of rooms, so small that the largest of them does not take up as much space as a good dining-table, and each of these doll-house rooms is crowded with prints, old china, and all sorts of knick-knacks and *rococo* wares. The park is a little paradise. The Ilm is seen here to the best advantage: it is clearer than at Weimar, and winds about gracefully between the banks, on one side steep, and curtained with turf and shrubs, or fine trees. It was here, at a point where the bank forms a promontory into the river, that Goethe and his Court friends got up the performance of an operetta, "Die Fischerin," by torchlight. On the way to Tiefurt lies the Webicht, a beautiful wood, through which runs excellent carriage-roads and grassy footpaths. It was a rich enjoyment to skirt this wood along the Jena road, and see the sky arching grandly down over the open fields on the other side of us, the evening red flushing the west over the town, and the stars coming out as if to relieve the sun in its watch; or to take the winding road through the wood, under its tall overarching trees, now bending their mossy trunks forward, now standing with the stately erectness of lofty pillars; or to saunter along the grassy footpaths where the sunlight streamed through the fairy-like foliage of the silvery barked birches.

Stout pedestrians who go to Weimar will do well to make a walking excursion, as we did, to Ettersburg, a more distant summer residence of the Grand Duke, interesting to us beforehand as the scene of private theatricals and *sprees* in the Goethe days. We set out on one of the brightest and hottest mornings that August ever bestowed, and it required some resolution to trudge along the shadeless *chaussée*, which formed

the first two or three miles of our way. One compensating pleasure was the sight of the beautiful mountain-ash trees in full berry, which, alternately with cherry-trees, border the road for a considerable distance. At last we rested from our broiling walk on the borders of a glorious pine-wood, so extensive that the trees in the distance form a complete wall with their trunks, and so give one a twilight very welcome on a summer's noon. Under these pines you tread on a carpet of the softest moss, so that you hear no sound of a footstep, and all is as solemn and still as in the crypt of a cathedral. Presently we passed out of the pine-wood into one of limes, beeches, and other trees of transparent and light foliage, and from this again we emerged into the open space of the Ettersburg Park in front of the Schloss, which is finely placed on an eminence commanding a magnificent view of the far-reaching woods. Prince Pückler Muskau has been of service here by recommending openings to be made in the woods, in the taste of the English parks. The Schloss, which is a favorite residence of the Grand Duke, is a house of very moderate size, and no pretension of any kind. Its stuccoed walls, and doors long unacquainted with fresh paint, would look distressingly shabby to the owner of a villa at Richmond or Twickenham; but much beauty is procured here at slight expense, by the tasteful disposition of creepers on the balustrades, and pretty vases full of plants ranged along the steps, or suspended in the little piazza beneath them. A walk through a beech-wood took us to the Mooshütte, in front of which stands the famous beech from whence Goethe denounced Jacobi's "Woldemar." The bark is covered with initials cut by him and his friends.

People who only allow themselves to be idle under the pretext of hydropathizing, may find all the apparatus necessary to satisfy their conscience at Beroka, a village seated in a lovely valley about six miles from Weimar. Now and then a Weimar family takes lodgings here for the summer, retiring from the quiet of the capital to the deeper quiet of Beroka; but generally the place seems not much frequented. It would be difficult to imagine a more peace-inspiring scene than this little valley. The hanging woods—the soft coloring and graceful outline of the uplands—the village, with its roofs and spire of a reddish-violet hue, muffled in luxuriant trees—the white Kurhaus glittering on a grassy slope—the avenue of poplars contrasting its pretty primness with the wild bushy outline of the wood-covered hill, which rises abruptly from the smooth, green meadows—the clear winding stream, now

sparkling in the sun, now hiding itself under soft gray willows, — all this makes an enchanting picture. The walk to Berka and back was a favorite expedition with us and a few Weimar friends, for the road thither is a pleasant one, leading at first through open cultivated fields, dotted here and there with villages, and then through wooded hills — the outskirts of the Thuringian Forest. We used not to despise the fine plums which hung in tempting abundance by the roadside; but we afterwards found that we had been deceived in supposing ourselves free to pluck them, as if it were the golden age, and that we were liable to a penalty of ten groschen for our depredations.

But I must not allow myself to be exhaustive on pleasures which seem monotonous when told, though in enjoying them one is as far from wishing them to be more various as from wishing for any change in the sweet sameness of successive summer days. I will only advise the reader who has yet to make excursions in Thuringia to visit Jena, less for its traditions than for its fine scenery, which makes it, as Goethe says, a delicious place, in spite of its dull, ugly streets; and exhort him, above all, to brave the discomforts of a *Postwagen* for the sake of getting to Ilmenau. Here he will find the grandest pine-clad hills, with endless walks under their solemn shades; beech-woods where every tree is a picture; an air that he will breathe with as conscious a pleasure as if he were taking iced water on a hot day; baths *ad libitum*, with a *douche* lofty and tremendous enough to invigorate the giant Cormoran; and, more than all, one of the most interesting relics of Goethe, who had a great love for Ilmenau. This is the small wooden house, on the height called the Kickenhahn, where he often lived in his long retirements here, and where you may see written by his own hand, near the window-frame, those wonderful lines — perhaps the finest expression yet given to the sense of resignation inspired by the sublime calm of Nature: —

“Ueber allen Gipfeln  
Ist Ruh,  
In allen Wipfeln  
Spürest du  
Kaum einen Hauch;  
Die Vögelnschweigen im Walde.  
Warte nur, balde  
Ruhest du auch.”

## ADDRESS TO WORKING MEN, BY FELIX HOLT.

FELLOW-WORKMEN, — I am not going to take up your time by complimenting you. It has been the fashion to compliment kings and other authorities when they have come into power, and to tell them that, under their wise and beneficent rule, happiness would certainly overflow the land. But the end has not always corresponded to that beginning. If it were true that we who work for wages had more of the wisdom and virtue necessary to the right use of power than has been shown by the aristocratic and mercantile classes, we should not glory much in that fact, or consider that it carried with it any near approach to infallibility.

In my opinion, there has been too much complimenting of that sort; and whenever a speaker, whether he is one of ourselves or not, wastes our time in boasting or flattery, I say, let us hiss him. If we have the beginning of wisdom, which is, to know a little truth about ourselves, we know that as a body we are neither very wise nor very virtuous. And to prove this, I will not point specially to our own habits and doings, but to the general state of the country. Any nation that had within it a majority of men — and we are the majority — possessed of much wisdom and virtue, would not tolerate the bad practices, the commercial lying and swindling, the poisonous adulteration of goods, the retail cheating, and the political bribery, which are carried on boldly in the midst of us. A majority has the power of creating a public opinion. We could groan and hiss before we had the franchise: if we had groaned and hissed in the right place, if we had discerned better between good and evil, if the multitude of us artisans, and factory hands, and miners, and laborers of all sorts, had been skilful, faithful, well-judging, industrious, sober — and I don't see how there can be wisdom and virtue anywhere without those qualities — we should have made an audience that would have shamed the other classes out of their share in the national vices. We should have had better members of Parliament, better religious teachers, honest tradesmen, fewer foolish demagogues, less impudence in infamous and brutal



men ; and we should not have had among us the abomination of men calling themselves religious while living in splendor on ill-gotten gains. I say, it is not possible for any society in which there is a very large body of wise and virtuous men to be as vicious as our society is — to have as low a standard of right and wrong, to have so much belief in falsehood, or to have so degrading, barbarous a notion of what pleasure is, or of what justly raises a man above his fellows. Therefore, let us have done with this nonsense about our being much better than the rest of our countrymen, or the pretence that that was a reason why we ought to have such an extension of the franchise as has been given to us. The reason for our having the franchise, as I want presently to show, lies somewhere else than in our personal good qualities, and does not in the least lie in any high betting chance that a delegate is a better man than a duke, or that a Sheffield grinder is a better man than any one of the firm he works for.

However, we have got our franchise now. We have been sarcastically called in the House of Commons the future masters of the country ; and if that sarcasm contains any truth, it seems to me that the first thing we had better think of is, our heavy responsibility ; that is to say, the terrible risk we run of working mischief and missing good, as others have done before us. Suppose certain men, discontented with the irrigation of a country which depended for all its prosperity on the right direction being given to the waters of a great river, had got the management of the irrigation before they were quite sure how exactly it could be altered for the better, or whether they could command the necessary agency for such an alteration. Those men would have a difficult and dangerous business on their hands ; and the more sense, feeling, and knowledge they had, the more they would be likely to tremble rather than to triumph. Our situation is not altogether unlike theirs. For general prosperity and well-being is a vast crop, that like the corn in Egypt can be come at, not at all by hurried snatching, but only by a well-judged patient process ; and whether our political power will be any good to us now we have got it, must depend entirely on the means and materials — the knowledge, ability, and honesty — we have at command. These three things are the only conditions on which we can get any lasting benefit, as every clever workman among us knows : he knows that for an article to be worth much there must be a good invention or plan to go upon, there must be well-prepared material, and there must be skilful and honest work in carry-

ing out the plan. And by this test we may try those who want to be our leaders. Have they anything to offer us besides indignant talk? When they tell us we ought to have this, that, or the other thing, can they explain to us any reasonable, fair, safe way of getting it? Can they argue in favor of a particular change by showing us pretty closely how the change is likely to work? I don't want to decry a just indignation; on the contrary, I should like it to be more thorough and general. A wise man, more than two thousand years ago, when he was asked what would most tend to lessen injustice in the world, said, "That every bystander should feel as indignant at a wrong as if he himself were the sufferer." Let us cherish such indignation. But the long-growing evils of a great nation are a tangled business, asking for a good deal more than indignation in order to be got rid of. Indignation is a fine war-horse, but the war-horse must be ridden by a man: it must be ridden by rationality, skill, courage, armed with the right weapons, and taking definite aim.

We have reason to be discontented with many things, and, looking back either through the history of England to much earlier generations or to the legislation and administration of later times, we are justified in saying that many of the evils under which our country now suffers are the consequences of folly, ignorance, neglect, or self-seeking in those who, at different times, have wielded the powers of rank, office, and money. But the more bitterly we feel this, the more loudly we utter it, the stronger is the obligation we lay on ourselves to beware lest we also, by a too hasty wrestling of measures which seem to promise an immediate partial relief, make a worse time of it for our own generation, and leave a bad inheritance to our children. The deepest curse of wrong-doing, whether of the foolish or wicked sort, is that its effects are difficult to be undone. I suppose there is hardly anything more to be shuddered at than that part of the history of disease which shows how, when a man injures his constitution by a life of vicious excess, his children and grandchildren inherit diseased bodies and minds, and how the effects of that unhappy inheritance continue to spread beyond our calculation. This is only one example of the law by which human lives are linked together: another example of what we complain of when we point to our pauperism, to the brutal ignorance of multitudes among our fellow-countrymen, to the weight of taxation laid on us by blamable wars, to the wasteful channels made for the public money, to the expense and

trouble of getting justice, and call these the effects of bad rule. This is the law that we all bear the yoke of, the law of no man's making, and which no man can undo. Everybody now sees an example of it in the case of Ireland. We who are living now are sufferers by the wrong-doing of those who lived before us; we are sufferers by each other's wrong-doing; and the children who come after us are and will be sufferers from the same causes. Will any man say he doesn't care for that law — it is nothing to him — what he wants is to better himself? With what face then will he complain of any injury? If he says that in politics or in any sort of social action he will not care to know what are likely to be the consequences to others besides himself, he is defending the very worst doings that have brought about his discontent. He might as well say that there is no better rule needful for men than that each should tug and rive for what will please him, without caring how that tugging will act on the fine widespread network of society in which he is fast meshed. If any man taught that as a doctrine, we should know him for a fool. But there are men who act upon it: every scoundrel, for example, whether he is a rich religious scoundrel who lies and cheats on a large scale, and will perhaps come and ask you to send him to Parliament, or a poor pocket-picking scoundrel, who will steal your loose pence while you are listening round the platform. None of us are so ignorant as not to know that a society, a nation, is held together by just the opposite doctrine and action — by the dependence of men on each other and the sense they have of a common interest in preventing injury. And we working men are, I think, of all classes the last that can afford to forget this; for if we did we should be much like sailors outting away the timbers of our own ship to warm our grog with. For what else is the meaning of our Trades-unions? What else is the meaning of every flag we carry, every procession we make, every crowd we collect for the sake of making some protest on behalf of our body as receivers of wages, if not this: that it is our interest to stand by each other, and that this being the common interest, no one of us will try to make a good bargain for himself without considering what will be good for his fellows? And every member of a union believes that the wider he can spread his union, the stronger and surer will be the effect of it. So I think I shall be borne out in saying that a working man who can put two and two together, or take three from four and see what will be the remainder, can understand that a society, to

be well off, must be made up chiefly of men who consider the general good as well as their own.

Well, but taking the world as it is — and this is one way we must take it when we want to find out how it can be improved — no society is made up of a single class: society stands before us like that wonderful piece of life, the human body, with all its various parts depending on one another, and with a terrible liability to get wrong because of that delicate dependence. We all know how many diseases the human body is apt to suffer from, and how difficult it is even for the doctors to find out exactly where the seat or beginning of the disorder is. That is because the body is made up of so many various parts, all related to each other, or likely all to feel the effect if any one of them goes wrong. It is somewhat the same with our old nations or societies. No society ever stood long in the world without getting to be composed of different classes. Now, it is all pretence to say that there is no such thing as Class Interest. It is clear that if any particular number of men get a particular benefit from any existing institution, they are likely to band together, in order to keep up that benefit and increase it, until it is perceived to be unfair and injurious to another large number, who get knowledge and strength enough to set up a resistance. And this, again, has been part of the history of every great society since history began. But the simple reason for this being, that any large body of men is likely to have more of stupidity, narrowness, and greed than of far-sightedness and generosity, it is plain that the number who resist unfairness and injury are in danger of becoming injurious in their turn. And in this way a justifiable resistance has become a damaging convulsion, making everything worse instead of better. This has been seen so often that we ought to profit a little by the experience. So long as there is selfishness in men; so long as they have not found out for themselves institutions which express and carry into practice the truth, that the highest interest of mankind must at last be a common and not a divided interest; so long as the gradual operation of steady causes has not made that truth a part of every man's knowledge and feeling, just as we now not only know that it is good for our health to be cleanly, but feel that cleanliness is only another word for comfort, which is the under-side or lining of all pleasure; so long, I say, as men wink at their own knowingness, or hold their heads high, because they have got an advantage over their fellows; so long Class Interest

will be in danger of making itself felt injuriously. No set of men will get any sort of power without being in danger of wanting more than their right share. But, on the other hand, it is just as certain that no set of men will get angry at having less than their right share, and set up a claim on that ground, without falling into just the same danger of exacting too much, and exacting it in wrong ways. It's human nature we have got to work with all round, and nothing else. That seems like saying something very commonplace — nay, obvious; as if one should say that where there are hands there are mouths. Yet, to hear a good deal of the speechifying and to see a good deal of the action that goes forward, one might suppose it was forgotten.

But I come back to this : that, in our old society, there are old institutions, and among them the various distinctions and inherited advantages of classes, which have shaped themselves along with all the wonderful slow-growing system of things made up of our laws, our commerce, and our stores of all sorts, whether in material objects, such as buildings and machinery, or in knowledge, such as scientific thought and professional skill. Just as in that case I spoke of before, the irrigation of a country, which must absolutely have its water distributed or it will bear no crop; there are the old channels, the old banks, and the old pumps, which must be used as they are until new and better have been prepared, or the structure of the old has been gradually altered. But it would be fool's work to batter down a pump only because a better might be made, when you had no machinery ready for a new one: it would be wicked work, if villages lost their crops by it. Now the only safe way by which society can be steadily improved and our worst evils reduced, is not by any attempt to do away directly with the actually existing class distinctions and advantages, as if everybody could have the same sort of work, or lead the same sort of life (which none of my hearers are stupid enough to suppose), but by the turning of Class Interests into Class Functions or duties. What I mean is, that each class should be urged by the surrounding conditions to perform its particular work under the strong pressure of responsibility to the nation at large; that our public affairs should be got into a state in which there should be no impunity for foolish or faithless conduct. In this way, the public judgment would sift out incapability and dishonesty from posts of high charge, and even personal ambition would necessarily become of a worthier sort, since the desires of the

most selfish men must be a good deal shaped by the opinions of those around them ; and for one person to put on a cap and bells, or to go about dishonest or paltry ways of getting rich that he may spend a vast sum of money in having more finery than his neighbors, he must be pretty sure of a crowd who will applaud him. Now changes can only be good in proportion as they help to bring about this sort of result : in proportion as they put knowledge in the place of ignorance, and fellow-feeling in the place of selfishness. In the course of that substitution class distinctions must inevitably change their character, and represent the varying Duties of men, not their varying Interests. But this end will not come by impatience. "Day will not break the sooner because we get up before the twilight." Still less will it come by mere undoing, or change merely as change. And moreover, if we believed that it would be unconditionally hastened by our getting the franchise, we should be what I call superstitious men, believing in magic, or the production of a result by hocus-pocus. Our getting the franchise will greatly hasten that good end in proportion only as every one of us has the knowledge, the foresight, the conscience, that will make him well-judging and scrupulous in the use of it. The nature of things in this world has been determined for us beforehand, and in such a way that no ship can be expected to sail well on a difficult voyage, and reach the right port, unless it is well manned : the nature of the winds and the waves, of the timbers, the sails and the cordage, will not accommodate itself to drunken, mutinous sailors.

You will not suspect me of wanting to preach any cant to you, or of joining in the pretence that everything is in a fine way, and need not be made better. What I am striving to keep in our minds is the care, the precaution, with which we should go about making things better, so that the public order may not be destroyed, so that no fatal shock may be given to this society of ours, this living body in which our lives are bound up. After the Reform Bill of 1832 I was in an election riot, which showed me clearly, on a small scale, what public disorder must always be ; and I have never forgotten that the riot was brought about chiefly by the agency of dishonest men who professed to be on the people's side. Now, the danger hanging over change is great, just in proportion as it tends to produce such disorder by giving any large number of ignorant men, whose notions of what is good are of a low and brutal sort, the belief that they have got power into their

hands, and may do pretty much as they like. If any one can look round us and say that he sees no signs of any such danger now, and that our national condition is running along like a clear broadening stream, safe not to get choked with mud, I call him a cheerful man: perhaps he does his own gardening, and seldom takes exercise far away from home. To us who have no gardens, and often walk abroad, it is plain that we can never get into a bit of a crowd but we must rub clothes with a set of Roughs, who have the worst vices of the worst rich — who are gamblers, sots, libertines, knaves, or else mere sensual simplotons and victims. They are the ugly crop that has sprung up while the stewards have been sleeping; they are the multiplying brood begotten by parents who have been left without all teaching save that of a too craving body, without all well-being save the fading delusions of drugged beer and gin. They are the hideous margin of society, at one edge drawing towards it the undesigning ignorant poor, at the other darkening imperceptibly into the lowest criminal class. Here is one of the evils which cannot be got rid of quickly, and against which any of us who have got sense, decency, and instruction have need to watch. That these degraded fellow-men could really get the mastery in a persistent disobedience to the laws and in a struggle to subvert order, I do not believe; but wretched calamities would come from the very beginning of such a struggle, and the continuance of it would be a civil war, in which the inspiration on both sides might soon cease to be even a false notion of good, and might become the direct savage impulse of ferocity. We have all to see to it that we do not help to rouse what I may call the savage beast in the breasts of our generation — that we do not help to poison the nation's blood, and make richer provision for bestiality to come. We know well enough that oppressors have sinned in this way — that oppression has notoriously made men mad; and we are determined to resist oppression. But let us, if possible, show that we can keep sane in our resistance, and shape our means more and more reasonably towards the least harmful, and therefore the speediest, attainment of our end. Let us, I say, show that our spirits are too strong to be driven mad, but can keep that sober determination which alone gives mastery over the adaptation of means. And a first guaranty of this sanity will be to act as if we understood that the fundamental duty of a Government is to preserve order, to enforce obedience of the laws. It has been held hitherto that a man can be depended on as a guardian of

order only when he has much money and comfort to lose. But a better state of things would be, that men who had little money and not much comfort should still be guardians of order, because they had sense to see that disorder would do no good, and had a heart of justice, pity, and fortitude, to keep them from making more misery only because they felt some misery themselves. There are thousands of artisans who have already shown this fine spirit, and have endured much with patient heroism. If such a spirit spread, and penetrated us all, we should soon become the masters of the country in the best sense and to the best ends. For, the public order being preserved, there can be no government in future that will not be determined by our insistence on our fair and practicable demands. It is only by disorder that our demands will be choked, that we shall find ourselves lost amongst a brutal rabble, with all the intelligence of the country opposed to us, and see government in the shape of guns that will sweep us down in the ignoble martyrdom of fools.

It has been a too common notion that to insist much on the preservation of order is the part of a selfish aristocracy and a selfish commercial class, because among these, in the nature of things, have been found the opponents of change. I am a Radical; and, what is more, I am not a Radical with a title or a French cook or even an entrance into fine society. I expect great changes, and I desire them. But I don't expect them to come in a hurry, by mere inconsiderate sweeping. A Hercules with a big besom is a fine thing for a filthy stable, but not for weeding a seed-bed, where his besom would soon make a barren floor.

That is old-fashioned talk, some one may say. We know all that.

Yes, when things are put in an extreme way, most people think they know them; but, after all, they are comparatively few who see the small degrees by which those extremes are arrived at, or have the resolution and self-control to resist the little impulses by which they creep on surely towards a fatal end. Does anybody set out meaning to ruin himself, or to drink himself to death, or to waste his life so that he becomes a despicable old man, a superannuated nuisance, like a fly in winter? Yet there are plenty, of whose lot this is the pitiable story. Well now, supposing us all to have the best inten-



not thinking of. For just as there are many things which we know better and feel much more strongly than the richer, softer-handed classes can know or feel them; so there are many things — many precious benefits — which we, by the very fact of our privations, our lack of leisure and instruction, are not so likely to be aware of and take into our account. Those precious benefits form a chief part of what I may call the common estate of society: a wealth over and above buildings, machinery, produce, shipping, and so on, though closely connected with these; a wealth of a more delicate kind, that we may more unconsciously bring into danger, doing harm and not knowing that we do it. I mean that treasure of knowledge, science, poetry, refinement of thought, feeling, and manners, great memories, and the interpretation of great records, which is carried on from the minds of one generation to the minds of another. This is something distinct from the indulgences of luxury and the pursuit of vain finery; and one of the hardships in the lot of working men is that they have been for the most part shut out from sharing in this treasure. It can make a man's life very great, very full of delight, though he has no smart furniture and no horses: it also yields a great deal of discovery that corrects error, and of invention that lessens bodily pain, and must at last make life easier for all.

Now the security of this treasure demands, not only the preservation of order, but a certain patience on our part with many institutions and facts of various kinds, especially touching the accumulation of wealth, which, from the light we stand in, we are more likely to discern the evil than the good of. It is constantly the task of practical wisdom not to say, "This is good, and I will have it," but to say, "This is the less of two unavoidable evils, and I will bear it." And this treasure of knowledge, which consists in the fine activity, the exalted vision of many minds, is bound up at present with conditions which have much evil in them. Just as in the case of material wealth and its distribution we are obliged to take the selfishness and weakness of human nature into account, and, however we insist that men might act better, are forced, unless we are fanatical simpletons, to consider how they are likely to act; so in this matter of the wealth that is carried in men's minds, we have to reflect that the too absolute predominance of a class whose wants have been of a common sort, who are chiefly struggling to get better and more food, clothing, shelter, and bodily recreation, may lead to hasty measures for the sake of having things more fairly shared, which,

even if they did not fail of their object, would at last debase the life of the nation. Do anything which will throw the glasses who hold the treasures of knowledge — nay, I may say, the treasure of refined needs — into the background, cause them to withdraw from public affairs, stop too suddenly any of the sources by which their leisure and ease are furnished, rob them of the chances by which they may be influential and pre-eminent, and you do something as short-sighted as the acts of France and Spain when in jealousy and wrath, not altogether unprovoked, they drove from among them races and classes that held the traditions of handicraft and agriculture. You injure your own inheritance and the inheritance of your children. You may truly say that this which I call the common estate of society has been anything but common to you; but the same may be said, by many of us, of the sunlight and the air, of the sky and the fields, of parks and holiday games. Nevertheless, that these blessings exist makes life worthier to us, and urges us the more to energetic, likely means of getting our share in them; and I say, let us watch carefully, lest we do anything to lessen this treasure which is held in the minds of men, while we exert ourselves first of all, and to the very utmost, that we and our children may share in all its benefits. Yes; exert ourselves to the utmost, to break the yoke of ignorance. If we demand more leisure, more ease in our lives, let us show that we don't deserve the reproach of wanting to shirk that industry which, in some form or other, every man, whether rich or poor, should feel himself as much bound to as he is bound to decency. Let us show that we want to have some time and strength left to us, that we may use it, not for brutal indulgence, but for the rational exercise of the faculties which make us men. Without this no political measures can benefit us. No political institution will alter the nature of Ignorance, or hinder it from producing vice and misery. Let Ignorance start how it will, it must run the same round of low appetites, poverty, slavery, and superstition. Some of us know this well — nay, I will say, feel it; for knowledge of this kind cuts deep; and to us it is one of the most painful facts belonging to our condition that there are numbers of our fellow-workmen who are so far from feeling in the same way, that they never use the imperfect opportunities already offered them for giving their children some schooling, but turn their little ones of tender age into bread-winners, often at cruel tasks, exposed to the horrible infection of childish vice. Of course, the causes of these

hideous things go a long way back. Parents' misery has made parents' wickedness. But we, who are still blessed with the hearts of fathers and the consciences of men — we who have some knowledge of the curse entailed on broods of creatures in human shape, whose enfeebled bodies and dull perverted minds are mere centres of uneasiness, in whom even appetite is feeble, and joy impossible, — I say we are bound to use all the means at our command to help putting a stop to this horror. Here, it seems to me, is a way in which we may use extended co-operation among us to the most momentous of all purposes, and make conditions of enrolment that would strengthen all educational measures. It is true enough that there is a low sense of parental duties in the nation at large, and that numbers who have no excuse in bodily hardship seem to think it a light thing to beget children, — to bring human beings, with all their tremendous possibilities, into this difficult world, — and then take little heed how they are disciplined and furnished for the perilous journey they are sent on without any asking of their own. This is a sin shared in more or less by all classes; but there are sins which, like taxation, fall the heaviest on the poorest, and none have such galling reasons as we working men to try and rouse to the utmost the feeling of responsibility in fathers and mothers. We have been urged into co-operation by the pressure of common demands. In war men need each other more; and where a given point has to be defended, fighters inevitably find themselves shoulder to shoulder. So fellowship grows; so grow the rules of fellowship, which gradually shape themselves to thoroughness as the idea of a common good becomes more complete. We feel a right to say, If you will be one of us, you must make such and such a contribution, you must renounce such and such a separate advantage, you must set your face against such and such an infringement. If we have any false ideas about our common good, our rules will be wrong, and we shall be co-operating to damage each other. But now, here is a part of our good, without which everything else we strive for will be worthless, — I mean the rescue of our children. Let us demand from the members of our Unions that they fulfil their duty as parents in this definite matter, which rules can reach. Let us demand that they send their children to school, so as not to go on recklessly breeding a moral pestilence among us, just as strictly as we demand that they pay their contributions to a common fund, understood to be for a common benefit. While we watch our

public men, let us watch one another as to this duty, which is also public, and more momentous even than obedience to sanitary regulations. While we resolutely declare against the wickedness in high places, let us set ourselves also against the wickedness in low places; not quarrelling which came first, or which is the worse of the two, — not trying to settle the miserable precedence of plague or famine, but insisting unflinchingly on remedies once ascertained, and summoning those who hold the treasure of knowledge to remember that they hold it in trust, and that with them lies the task of searching for new remedies, and finding the right methods of applying them.

To find right remedies and right methods! Here is the great function of knowledge: here the life of one man may make a fresh era straight away, in which a sort of suffering that has existed shall exist no more. For the thousands of years, down to the middle of the sixteenth century since Christ, that human limbs had been hacked and amputated, nobody knew how to stop the bleeding except by searing the ends of the vessels with red-hot iron. But then came a man named Ambrose Paré, and said, "Tie up the arteries!" That was a fine word to utter. It contained the statement of a method — a plan by which a particular evil was forever assuaged. Let us try to discern the men whose words carry that sort of kernel, and choose such men to be our guides and representatives — not choose platform swaggerers, who bring us nothing but the ocean to make our broth with.

To get the chief power into the hands of the wisest, which means to get our life regulated according to the truest principles mankind is in possession of, is a problem as old as the very notion of wisdom. The solution comes slowly, because men collectively can only be made to embrace principles, and to act on them, by the slow stupefying teaching of the world's events. Men will go on planting potatoes, and nothing else but potatoes, till a potato disease comes and forces them to find out the advantage of a varied crop. Selfishness, stupidity, sloth, persist in trying to adapt the world to their desires, till a time comes when the world manifests itself as too decidedly inconvenient to them. Wisdom stands outside of man and urges itself upon him, like the marks of the changing seasons, before it finds a home within him, directs his actions, and from the precious effects of obedience begets a corresponding love.

But while still outside of us, wisdom often looks terrible,

and wears strange forms, wrapped in the changing conditions of a struggling world. It wears now the form of wants and just demands in a great multitude of British men: wants and demands urged into existence by the forces of a maturing world. And it is in virtue of this — in virtue of this presence of wisdom on our side as a mighty fact, physical and moral, which must enter into and shape the thoughts and actions of mankind — that we working men have obtained the suffrage. Not because we are an excellent multitude, but because we are a needy multitude.

But now, for our own part, we have seriously to consider this outside wisdom which lies in the supreme unalterable nature of things, and watch to give it a home within us and obey it. If the claims of the unendowed multitude of working men hold within them principles which must shape the future, it is not less true that the endowed classes, in their inheritance from the past, hold the precious material without which no worthy, noble future can be moulded. Many of the highest uses of life are in their keeping; and if privilege has often been abused, it has also been the nurse of excellence. Here again we have to submit ourselves to the great law of inheritance. If we quarrel with the way in which the labors and earnings of the past have been preserved and handed down, we are just as bigoted, just as narrow, just as wanting in that religion which keeps an open ear and an obedient mind to the teachings of fact, as we accuse those of being who quarrel with the new truths and new needs which are disclosed in the present. The deeper insight we get into the causes of human trouble, and the ways by which men are made better and happier, the less we shall be inclined to the unprofitable spirit and practice of reproaching classes as such in a wholesale fashion. Not all the evils of our condition are such as we can justly blame others for; and, I repeat, many of them are such as no change of institutions can quickly remedy. To discern between the evils that energy can remove and the evils that patience must bear, makes the difference between manliness and childishness, between good sense and folly. And more than that, without such discernment, seeing that we have grave duties towards our own body and the country at large, we can hardly escape acts of fatal rashness and injustice.

I am addressing a mixed assembly of workmen, and some of you may be as well or better fitted than I am to take up this office. But they will not think it amiss in me that I

have tried to bring together the considerations most likely to be of service to us in preparing ourselves for the use of our new opportunities. I have avoided touching on special questions. The best help towards judging well on these is to approach them in the right temper, without vain expectation, and with a resolution which is mixed with temperance.

## LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

To lay down in the shape of practical moral rules courses of conduct only to be made real by the rarest states of motive and disposition, tends not to elevate but to de-  
Authorship. grade the general standard, by turning that rare attainment from an object of admiration into an impossible prescription, against which the average nature first rebels and then flings out ridicule. It is for art to present images of a lovelier order than the actual, gently winning the affections, and so determining the taste. But in any rational criticism of the time which is meant to guide a practical reform, it is idle to insist that action ought to be this or that, without considering how far the outward conditions of such change are present, even supposing the inward disposition towards it. Practically, we must be satisfied to aim at something short of perfection—and at something very much farther off it in one case than in another. While the fundamental conceptions of morality seem as stationary through ages as the laws of life, so that a moral manual written eighteen centuries ago still admonishes us that we are low in our attainments, it is quite otherwise with the degree to which moral conceptions have penetrated the various forms of social activity, and made what may be called the special conscience of each calling, art, or industry. While on some points of social duty public opinion has reached a tolerably high standard, on others a public opinion is not yet born; and there are even some functions and practices with regard to which men far above the line in honorableness of nature feel hardly any scrupulosity, though their consequent behavior is easily shown to be as injurious as bribery, or any other slowly poisonous procedure which degrades the social vitality.

Among those callings which have not yet acquired anything near a full-grown conscience in the public mind is Authorship. Yet the changes brought about by the spread of instruction and the consequent struggles of an uneasy ambition, are, or at least might well be, forcing on many minds the need of some regulating principle with regard to the publication

of intellectual products, which would override the rule of the market: a principle, that is, which should be derived from a fixing of the author's vocation according to those characteristics in which it differs from the other bread-winning professions. Let this be done, if possible, without any cant, which would carry the subject into Utopia away from existing needs. The guidance wanted is a clear notion of what should justify men and women in assuming public authorship, and of the way in which they should be determined by what is usually called success. But the forms of authorship must be distinguished; journalism, for example, carrying a necessity for that continuous production which in other kinds of writing is precisely the evil to be fought against, and judicious careful compilation, which is a great public service, holding in its modest diligence a guaranty against those deductions of vanity and idleness which draw many a young gentleman into reviewing, instead of the sorting and copying which his small talents could not rise to with any vigor and completeness.

A manufacturer goes on producing calicoes as long and as fast as he can find a market for them; and in obeying this indication of demand he gives his factory its utmost usefulness to the world in general and to himself in particular. Another manufacturer buys a new invention of some light kind likely to attract the public fancy, is successful in finding a multitude who will give their testers for the transiently desirable commodity, and before the fashion is out, pockets a considerable sum: the commodity was colored with a green which had arsenic in it that damaged the factory workers and the purchasers. What then? These, he contends (or does not know or care to contend), are superficial effects, which it is folly to dwell upon while we have epidemic diseases and bad government.

The first manufacturer we will suppose blameless. Is an author simply on a par with him, as to the rules of production?

The author's capital is his brain-power — power of invention, power of writing. The manufacturer's capital, in fortunate cases, is being continually reproduced and increased. Here is the first grand difference between the capital which is turned into calico and the brain capital which is turned into literature. The calico scarcely varies in appropriateness of quality, no consumer is in danger of getting too much of it, and neglecting his boots, hats, and flannel-shirts in consequence. That there should be large quantities of the same



sort in the calico manufacture is an advantage: the sameness is desirable, and nobody is likely to roll his person in so many folds of calico as to become a mere bale of cotton goods, and nullify his senses of hearing and touch, while his morbid passion for Manchester shirtings makes him still cry "More!" The wise manufacturer gets richer and richer, and the consumers he supplies have their real wants satisfied and no more.

Let it be taken as admitted that all legitimate social activity must be beneficial to others besides the agent. To write prose or verse as a private exercise and satisfaction is not social activity; nobody is culpable for this any more than for learning other people's verse by heart if he does not neglect his proper business in consequence. If the exercise made him sillier or secretly more self-satisfied, that, to be sure, would be a roundabout way of injuring society; for though a certain mixture of silliness may lighten existence, we have at present more than enough.

But man or woman who publishes writings inevitably assumes the office of teacher or influencer of the public mind. Let him protest as he will that he only seeks to amuse, and has no pretension to do more than while away an hour of leisure or weariness — "the idle singer of an empty day" — he can no more escape influencing the moral taste, and with it the action of the intelligence, than a setter of fashions in furniture and dress can fill the shops with his designs and leave the garniture of persons and houses unaffected by his industry.

For a man who has a certain gift of writing to say, "I will make the most of it while the public likes my wares — as long as the market is open and I am able to supply it at a money profit — such profit being the sign of liking" — he should have a belief that his wares have nothing akin to the arsenic green in them, and also that his continuous supply is secure from a degradation in quality which the habit of consumption encouraged in the buyers may hinder them from marking their sense of by rejection; so that they complain, but pay, and read while they complain. Unless he has that belief, he is on a level with the manufacturer who gets rich by fancy-wares colored with arsenic green. He really cares for nothing but his income. He carries on authorship on the principle of the gin-palace.

And bad literature of the sort called amusing is spiritual gin.

A writer capable of being popular can only escape this

social culpability by first of all getting a profound sense that literature is good-for-nothing, if it is not admirably good: he must detest bad literature too heartily to be indifferent about producing it if only other people don't detest it. And if he has this sign of the divine afflatus within him, he must make up his mind that he must not pursue authorship as a vocation with a trading determination to get rich by it. It is in the highest sense lawful for him to get as good a price as he honorably can for the best work he is capable of; but not for him to force or hurry his production, or even do over again what has already been done, either by himself or others, so as to render his work no real contribution, for the sake of bringing up his income to the fancy pitch. An author who would keep a pure and noble conscience, and with that a developing instead of degenerating intellect and taste, must cast out of his aims the aim to be rich. And therefore he must keep his expenditure low—he must make for himself no dire necessity to earn sums in order to pay bills.

In opposition to this, it is common to cite Walter Scott's case, and cry, "Would the world have got as much innocent (and therefore salutary) pleasure out of Scott, if he had not brought himself under the pressure of money-need?" I think it would—and more; but since it is impossible to prove what would have been, I confine myself to replying that Scott was not justified in bringing himself into a position where severe consequences to others depended on his retaining or not retaining his mental competence. Still less is Scott to be taken as an example to be followed in this matter, even if it were admitted that money-need served to press at once the best and the most work out of him; any more than a great navigator who has brought his ship to port in spite of having taken a wrong and perilous route, is to be followed as to his route by navigators who are not yet ascertained to be great.

But after the restraints and rules which must guide the acknowledged author, whose power of making a real contribution is ascertained, comes the consideration, how or on what principle are we to find a check for that troublesome disposition to authorship arising from the spread of what is called Education, which turns a growing rush of vanity and ambition into this current? The well-taught, an increasing number, are almost all able to write essays on given themes, which demand new periodicals to save them from lying in cold obstruction. The ill-taught—also an increasing number—read many books, seem to themselves able to write others sur-

prisingly like what they read, and probably superior, since the variations are such as please their own fancy, and such as they would have recommended to their favorite authors: these ill-taught persons are perhaps idle and want to give themselves "an object;" or they are short of money, and feel disinclined to get it by a commoner kind of work; or they find a facility in putting sentences together which gives them more than a suspicion that they have genius, which, if not very cordially believed in by private confidants, will be recognized by an impartial public; or finally, they observe that writing is sometimes well paid, and sometimes a ground of fame or distinction, and without any use of punctilious logic, they conclude to become writers themselves.

As to these ill-taught persons, whatever medicines of a spiritual sort can be found good against mental emptiness and inflation—such medicines are needful for *them*. The contempt of the world for their productions only comes after their disease has wrought its worst effects. But what is to be said to the well-taught, who have such an alarming equality in their power of writing "like a scholar and a gentleman"? Perhaps they, too, can only be cured by the medicine of higher ideals in social duty, and by a fuller representation to themselves of the processes by which the general culture is furthered or impeded.

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In endeavoring to estimate a remarkable writer who aimed at more than temporary influence, we have first to consider what was his individual contribution to the spiritual wealth of mankind? Had he a new conception? Did he animate long-known but neglected truths with new vigor, and cast fresh light on their relation to other admitted truths? Did he impregnate any ideas with a fresh store of emotion, and in this way enlarge the area of moral sentiment? Did he by a wise emphasis here, and a wise disregard there, give a more useful or beautiful proportion to aims or motives? And even where his thinking was most mixed with the sort of mistake which is obvious to the majority, as well as that which can only be discerned by the instructed, or made manifest by the progress of things, has it that salt of a noble enthusiasm which should rebuke our critical discrimination if its correctness is inspired

Judgments  
on Authors.

This is not the common or easy course to take in estimating a modern writer. It requires considerable knowledge of what he has himself done, as well as of what others had done before him, or what they were doing contemporaneously; it requires deliberate reflection as to the degree in which our own prejudices may hinder us from appreciating the intellectual or moral bearing of what on a first view offends us. An easier course is to notice some salient mistakes, and take them as decisive of the writer's incompetence; or to find out that something apparently much the same as what he has said in some connection not clearly ascertained, had been said by somebody else, though without great effect, until this new effect of discrediting the other's originality had shown itself as an adequate final cause: or to pronounce from the point of view of individual taste that this writer for whom regard is claimed is repulsive, wearisome, not to be borne except by those dull persons who are of a different opinion.

Elder writers who have passed into classics were doubtless treated in this easy way when they were still under the misfortune of being recent—nay, are still dismissed with the same rapidity of judgment by daring ignorance. But people who think that they have a reputation to lose in the matter of knowledge, have looked into cyclopædias and histories of philosophy or literature, and possessed themselves of the duly balanced epithets concerning the immortals. They are not left to their own unguided rashness, or their own unguided pusillanimity. And it is this sheeplike flock who have no direct impressions, no spontaneous delight, no genuine objection or self-confessed neutrality in relation to the writers become classic—it is these who are incapable of passing a genuine judgment on the living. Necessarily. The susceptibility they have kept active is a susceptibility to their own reputation for passing the right judgment, not the susceptibility to qualities in the object of judgment. Who learns to discriminate shades of color by considering what is expected of him? The habit of expressing borrowed judgments stupefies the sensibilities, which are the only foundation of genuine judgments, just as the constant reading and retailing of results from other men's observations through the microscope, without ever looking through the lens one's self, is an instruction in some truths and some prejudices, but is no instruction in observant susceptibility; on the contrary, it breeds a habit of inward seeing according to verbal statement, which dulls the power of outward seeing according to visual evidence.

On this subject, as on so many others, it is difficult to strike the balance between the educational needs of passivity or receptivity, and independent selection. We should learn nothing without the tendency to implicit acceptance; but there must clearly be a limit to such mental submission, else we should come to a stand-still. The human mind would be no better than a dried specimen, representing an unchangeable type. When the assimilation of new matter ceases, decay must begin. In a reasoned self-restraining deference there is as much energy as in rebellion; but among the less capable, one must admit that the superior energy is on the side of the rebels. And certainly a man who dares to say that he finds an eminent classic feeble here, extravagant there, and in general overrated, may chance to give an opinion which has some genuine discrimination in it concerning a new work or a living thinker — an opinion such as can hardly ever be got from the reputed judge who is a correct echo of the most approved phrases concerning those who have been already canonized.

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What is the best way of telling a story? Since the standard must be the interest of the audience, there must be several or many good ways rather than one best. For Story Telling. we get interested in the stories life presents to us through divers orders and modes of presentation. Very commonly our first awakening to a desire of knowing a man's past or future comes from our seeing him as a stranger in some unusual or pathetic or humorous situation, or manifesting some remarkable characteristics. We make inquiries in consequence, or we become observant and attentive whenever opportunities of knowing more may happen to present themselves without our search. You have seen a refined face among the prisoners picking tow in jail; you afterwards see the same unforgettable face in a pulpit: he must be of dull fibre who would not care to know more about a life which showed such contrasts, though he might gather his knowledge in a fragmentary and unchronological way.

Again, we have heard much, or at least something not quite common, about a man whom we have never seen, and hence we look round with curiosity when we are told that he is present; whatever he says or does before us is charged with a meaning due to our previous hearsay knowledge about him,

gathered either from dialogue of which he was expressly and emphatically the subject, or from incidental remark, or from general report either in or out of print.

These indirect ways of arriving at knowledge are always the most stirring even in relation to impersonal subjects. To see a chemical experiment gives an attractiveness to a definition of chemistry, and fills it with a significance which it would never have had without the pleasant shock of an unusual sequence such as the transformation of a solid into gas, and *vice versâ*. To see a word for the first time either as substantive or adjective in a connection where we care about knowing its complete meaning, is the way to vivify its meaning in our recollection. Curiosity becomes the more eager from the incompleteness of the first information. Moreover, it is in this way that memory works in its incidental revival of events: some salient experience appears in inward vision, and in consequence the antecedent facts are retraced from what is regarded as the beginning of the episode in which that experience made a more or less strikingly memorable part. "Ah! I remember addressing the mob from the hustings at Westminster — you wouldn't have thought that I could ever have been in such a position. Well, how I came there was in this way —;" and then follows a retrospective narration.

The modes of telling a story founded on these processes of outward and inward life derive their effectiveness from the superior mastery of images and pictures in grasping the attention — or, one might say with more fundamental accuracy, from the fact that our earliest, strongest impressions, our most intimate convictions, are simply images added to more or less of sensation. These are the primitive instruments of thought. Hence it is not surprising that early poetry took this way — telling a daring deed, a glorious achievement, without caring for what went before. The desire for orderly narration is a later, more reflective birth. The presence of the Jack in the box affects every child: it is the more reflective lad, the miniature philosopher, who wants to know how he got there.

The only stories life presents to us in an orderly way are those of our autobiography, or the career of our companions from our childhood upwards, or perhaps of our own children. But it is a great art to make a connected strictly relevant narrative of such careers as we can recount from the beginning. In these cases the sequence of associations is almost sure to overmaster the sense of proportion. Such narratives *ab ovo*

are summer's-day stories for happy loungers; not the cup of self-forgetting excitement to the busy who can snatch an hour of entertainment.

But the simple opening of a story with a date and necessary account of places and people, passing on quietly towards the more rousing elements of narrative and dramatic presentation, without need of retrospect, has its advantages which have to be measured by the nature of the story. Spirited narrative, without more than a touch of dialogue here and there, may be made eminently interesting, and is suited to the novelette. Examples of its charm are seen in the short tales in which the French have a mastery never reached by the English, who usually demand coarser flavors than are given by that delightful gayety which is well described by La Fontaine<sup>1</sup> as not any thing that provokes fits of laughter, but a certain charm, an agreeable mode of handling which lends attractiveness to all subjects even the most serious. And it is this sort of gayety which plays around the best French novelettes. But the opening chapters of the "Vicar of Wakefield" are as fine as any thing that can be done in this way.

Why should a story not be told in the most irregular fashion that an author's idiosyncrasy may prompt, provided that he gives us what we can enjoy? The objections to Sterne's wild way of telling "Tristram Shandy" lie more solidly in the quality of the interrupting matter than in the fact of interruption. The dear public would do well to reflect that they are often bored from the want of flexibility in their own minds. They are like the toppers of "one liquor."

The exercise of a voracious imagination in historical picturing seems to be capable of a development that might help the judgment greatly with regard to present and future events. By voracious imagination, I mean the working out in detail of the various steps by which political or a social change was reached, using all extant evidence and supplying deficiencies by careful analogical creation. How triumphant opinions originally spread — how institutions arose — what were the conditions of great inventions,

<sup>1</sup> "Je n'appelle pas gayeté ce qui excite le rire, mais un certain charme, un air agréable qu'on peut donner à toutes sortes de sujets, même les plus sérieux." — Preface to Fables.

discoveries, or theoretic conceptions — what circumstances affecting individual lots are attendant on the decay of long-established systems, — all these grand elements of history require the illumination of special imaginative treatment. But effective truth in this application of art requires freedom from the vulgar coercion of conventional plot, which is become hardly of higher influence on imaginative representation than a detailed "order" for a picture sent by a rich grocer to an eminent painter — allotting a certain portion of the canvas to a rural scene, another to a fashionable group, with a request for a murder in the middle distance, and a little comedy to relieve it. A slight approximation to the veracious glimpses of history artistically presented, which I am indicating, but applied only to an incident of contemporary life, is "*Un paquet de lettres*" by Gustave Droz. For want of such real, minute vision of how changes come about in the past, we fall into ridiculously inconsistent estimates of actual movements, condemning in the present what we bewail in the past, and pronouncing impossible processes that have been repeated again and again in the historical preparation of the very system under which we live. A false kind of idealization dulls our perception of the meaning in words when they relate to past events which have had a glorious issue: for lack of comparison no warning image rises to check scorn of the very phrases which in other associations are consecrated.

Utopian pictures help the reception of ideas as to constructive results, but hardly so much as a vivid presentation of how results have been actually brought about, especially in religious and social change. And there is the pathos, the heroism often accompanying the decay and final struggle of old systems, which has not had its share of tragic commemoration. What really took place in and around Constantine before, upon, and immediately after his declared conversion? Could a momentary flash be thrown on Eusebius in his sayings and doings as an ordinary man in bishop's garments? Or on Julian and Libanius? There has been abundant writing on such great turning-points, but not such as serves to instruct the imagination in true comparison. I want something different from the abstract treatment which belongs to grave history from a doctrinal point of view, and something different from the schemed picturesqueness of ordinary historical fiction. I want brief, severely conscientious reproductions, in their concrete incidents, of pregnant movements in the past.



The supremacy given in European cultures to the literatures of Greece and Rome has had an effect almost equal to that of a common religion in binding the Western nations together. It is foolish to be forever complaining of the consequent uniformity, as if there were an endless power of originality in the human mind. Great and precious origination must always be comparatively rare, and can only exist on condition of a wide massive uniformity. When a multitude of men have learned to use the same language in speech and writing, then and then only can the greatest masters of language arise. For in what does their mastery consist? They use words which are already a familiar medium of understanding and sympathy in such a way as greatly to enlarge the understanding and sympathy. Originality of this order changes the wild grasses into world-feeding grain. Idiosyncrasies are pepper and spices of questionable aroma.

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"Is the time we live in prosaic?" — "That depends: it must certainly be prosaic to one whose mind takes a prosaic stand in contemplating it." — "But it is precisely the most poetic minds that most groan over the vulgarity of the present, its degenerate sensibility to beauty, eagerness for materialistic explanation, noisy triviality." — "Perhaps they would have had the same complaint to make about the age of Elizabeth, if, living then, they had fixed their attention on its more sordid elements, or had been subject to the grating influence of its every-day meannesses, and had sought refuge from them in the contemplation of whatever suited their taste in a former age."

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We get our knowledge of perfect Love by glimpses and in fragments chiefly — the rarest only among us knowing what it is to worship and caress, reverence and cherish, divide our bread and mingle our thoughts at one and the same time, under inspiration of the same object. Finest aromas will so often leave the fruits to which they are native and cling elsewhere, leaving the fruit empty of all but its coarser structure!

In the times of national mixture when modern Europe was, as one may say, a-brewing, it was open to a man who did not like to be judged by the Roman law, to choose which of certain other codes he would be tried by. So, in our own times, they who openly adopt a higher rule than their neighbors, do thereby make act of choice as to the laws and precedents by which they shall be approved or condemned, and thus it may happen that we see a man morally pilloried for a very customary deed, and yet having no right to complain, inasmuch as in his foregoing deliberative course of life he had referred himself to the tribunal of those higher conceptions, before which such a deed is without question condemnable.

We Make  
our own  
Precedents.

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Tolerance first comes through equality of struggle, as in the case of Arianism and Catholicism in the early times — Valens, Eastern and Arian, Valentinian, Western and Catholic, alike publishing edicts of tolerance; or it comes from a common need of relief from an oppressive predominance, as when James II. published his Act of Tolerance towards non-Anglicans, being forced into liberality towards the Dissenters by the need to get it for the Catholics. Community of interest is the root of justice; community of suffering, the root of pity; community of joy, the root of love.

Birth of  
Tolerance.

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Enveloped in a common mist, we seem to walk in clearness ourselves, and behold only the mist that enshrouds others.

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Sympathetic people are often incommunicative about themselves: they give back reflected images which hide their own depths.

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The pond said to the ocean, "Why do you rage so? The wind is not so very violent — nay, it is already fallen. Look at me. I rose into no foaming waves, and am already smooth again."

Many feel themselves very confidently on safe ground when they say: It must be good for man to know the Truth. But it is clearly not good for a particular man to know some particular truth, as irremediable treachery in one whom he cherishes — better that he should die without knowing it.

Of scientific truth, is it not conceivable that some facts as to the tendency of things affecting the final destination of the race might be more hurtful when they had entered into the human consciousness than they would have been if they had remained purely external in their activity?

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There is no such thing as an impotent or neutral deity, if the deity be really believed in, and contemplated either in prayer or meditation. Every object of thought reacts on the mind that conceives it, still more on that which habitually contemplates it. In this we may be said to solicit help from a generalization or abstraction. Wordsworth had this truth in his consciousness when he wrote (in the *Prelude*):—

Divine Grace  
a Real Emanation.

“Nor general truths, which are themselves a sort  
Of elements and agents, Under-powers  
Subordinate helpers of the living mind —”

not indeed precisely in the same relation, but with a meaning which involves that wider moral influence.

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One can hardly insist too much, in the present stage of thinking, on the efficacy of feeling in stimulating to ardent co-operation, quite apart from the conviction that such co-operation is needed for the achievement of the end in view. Just as hatred will vent itself in private curses no longer believed to have any potency, and joy, in private singing far out among the woods and fields, so sympathetic feeling can only be satisfied by joining in the action which expresses it, though the added “Bravo!” the added push, the added penny, is no more than a grain of dust on a rolling mass. When students

‘A Fine  
Excess.’  
Feeling is  
Energy.

take the horses out of a political hero's carriage, and draw him home by the force of their own muscle, the struggle in each is simply to draw or push, without consideration whether his place would not be as well filled by somebody else, or whether his one arm be really needful to the effect. It is under the same inspiration that abundant help rushes towards the scene of a fire, rescuing imperilled lives, and laboring with generous rivalry in carrying buckets. So the old blind King John of Bohemia at the battle of Crécy begged his vassals to lead him into the fight that he might strike a good blow, though his own stroke, possibly fatal to himself, could not turn by a hair's-breadth the imperious course of victory.

The question, "Of what use is it for me to work towards an end confessedly good?" comes from that sapless kind of reasoning which is falsely taken for a sign of supreme mental activity, but is really due to languor, or incapability of that mental grasp which makes objects strongly present, and to a lack of sympathetic emotion. In the "Spanish Gypsy" Fedalma says, —

"The grandest death! to die in vain — for Love  
Greater than sways the forces of the world," —

referring to the image of the disciples throwing themselves, consciously in vain, on the Roman spears. I really believe and mean this, — not as a rule of general action, but as a possible grand instance of determining energy in human sympathy, which even in particular cases, where it has only a magnificent futility, is more adorable, or as we say divine, than un pitying force, or than a prudent calculation of results. Perhaps it is an implicit joy in the resources of our human nature which has stimulated admiration for acts of self-sacrifice which are vain as to their immediate end. Marcus Curtius was probably not imagined as concluding to himself that he and his horse would so fill up the gap as to make a smooth *terra firma*. The impulse and act made the heroism, not the correctness of adaptation. No doubt the passionate inspiration which prompts and sustains a course of self-sacrificing labor in the light of soberly estimated results gathers the

<sup>1</sup> V. what Demosthenes says (De Coronâ) about Athens pursuing the same course, though she had known from the beginning that her heroic resistance would be in vain.

highest title to our veneration, and makes the supreme heroism. But the generous leap of impulse is needed too to swell the flood of sympathy in us beholders, that we may not fall completely under the mastery of calculation, which in its turn may fail of ends for want of energy got from ardor. We have need to keep the sluices open for possible influxes of the rarer sort.

THE END.

